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CLOUD & CLEAR SKY

CLOUD AND CLEAR SKY

MY LETTER TO SRI AUROBINDO

BY
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"Side Lights on Western Civilization"



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PRELUDE

Dr. Radhakrishnan says, "the world is passing through a crisis", and he never says anything thoughtlessly. It is a shocking revelation that he has made. But there are two worlds, viz, this world and the other. Which of them is suffering most? For, they are inter-related, and Radhakrishnan is a philosopher who deals with both the worlds. Souls, it is usually supposed, migrate from the other world to this, and back from this world to the other. What is the cause of this migration to and fro? Answer:—Divine discontent. Souls come from the other world to enjoy the pleasures of the lila; they go back to enjoy the delight of peace.

What is divine discontent? It means the temperament or the emotional consciousness, associated with the dynamism of surplus energy. This energy is creative. It loathes unemployment. It is called divine, because it belongs primarily to God, who has transmitted it to us.

The world is the visible product of the dynamism of this creative energy. Is it the original, unchangeable product of that energy? We ordinarily believe that there is not much difference between the original and the actual present product. The theory of Evolution has brought disillusion into our conception of creation. The world that was originally created by the surplus dynamic energy of the divine was a mere atom, pronounced as atman by the ancient sages of India. We must not slightly speak of the atom or the atman. The world as we see it, vast and varied, has slowly evolved out of it. God in His wholeness is concealed within each of them. Romain Rolland, who is undeniably a great sage, says with great wisdom. :- "I see God in all that exists; I see Him as completely in the least fragment as in the whole cosmos. There is no difference of essence, and

power is universally infinite. That which lies hidden in an atom, if one only knew it, would blow up a whole world. The only difference is that it is, more or less, concentrated in the heart of a conscience, in an ego, or in a unit of energy, an *ion*.

We must not allow ourselves to be shocked by the words, "would blow up a whole world". It looks fiendish. There is, however, no essential difference between creation and destruction. The difference is an illusion caused by the hyper-discriminative duality of emotion. What is pleasant is supposed to issue out of creative, and what is painful out of destructive energy. Pleasure and pain are real as ephemeral states of consciousness. Continuous pleasure and continuous pain gradually fade and merge into each other, resulting in a state of consciousness which can be called neither pleasant nor painful. Time deadens consciousness, desirable as well as undesirable, which tries to perpetuate itself. This neutral consciousness is different from ananda.

2.

The blind lure of impure pleasure is the true cause of the migration from the other world to this. It is beautifully and forcefully described by Sri Aurobindo thus :- "The call of the unknown, the joy of the difficulty and danger of adventure, the will to attempt the impossible, to work out the incalculable, the will to create the new and the uncreated with one's own self and life as the material, the fascination of contradictions and their difficult harmonization—these things translated into another supraphysical, suprahuman consciousness higher and wider than the mental were the temptation that led to the fall". From this it is clear that creative energy brings the foolishly adventurous soul from the other world to this. No soul would have descended on Earth, if it knew that it would have to live as a prisoner of war.

The cause of the remigration from this world to the other is admirably described thus ;—"It is not to be denied, no spiritual experience will deny that this is an unideal and unsatisfactory world, strongly marked with the stamp of inadequacy, suffering, evil. Indeed, this perception is in a way the starting-point of the spiritual urge", which is poetically called 'home-sickness'. Aurobindo, however, deprecates this word. He wants to be nearer home, but he loathes home-life, home-internment. He is an adventurous spirit perennially in search of personal consummation. Instead of being confined at home, he wants to redeem this world and mankind by taking upon himself the very difficult task of transforming this unideal and unsatisfactory world into an ideal world illuminated with an unmanifested supermind, brought down directly from the transcendental solitude of the Absolute God, thus making it better than the other world, the existing supramental world, which is lighted with the stale, long-used, half-faded supramental light. When this has been accomplished, the urge to repatriation will cease. Men will become supermen, superior to the spirits that live in the other world, and enjoy higher truth, ananda, and the delight of direct God-vision in this very world. In quality this world will be superior to the other world, though remoter from God and His transcendental home. British I. C. S's are self-imprisoned in India. They soon get home-sick. They are captive in the hand of Mammon, a potentate as powerful as the Ego, who keep in confinement adventurers that come from the other world in order to divinise this world.

3

Surplus creative energy manifests itself in peacelessness, restlessness, disquiet, thoughtlessness and irrational activity. It is high time we put a final stop to the double migration, let the two worlds remain transfixed each in its own place, undisturbed by needless and mischievous immigration and emigration, let the souls

settle for ever in the world in which they now exist. But how to make them settle, how to stop the urge to migration and to repatriation. The rule at present is '*anywhere but here*'.

Aurobindo has undertaken to remove ignorance, suffering, evil from this world. These things exist only in this world which is a speck of dust in contrast with the universe, the world of stars. He says, 'These (sorrows and weakness, ignorance and *vikaras*, forgetfulness and supineness) are not universal or eternal things, but local and temporary, local mainly of this Earth, temporary in the brief period of the *kali yuga*'. "Our business is to bring down heaven on earth for ourselves and mankind". He can argue before God that this exceptional treatment to which the earth has been subjected is ungodlike, and should be done away with. If all the rest of the Universe is free from sorrows and *vikaras*, why should they be attached to the earth? But at the same time he asks for a higher kind of heaven for the earth by way of compensation for the sufferings of the past. The principle of the equality of rights having been once broken cannot be restored in a day. Retributive justice must have its play; and justice is superior to equality of treatment.

Aurobindo has not told us how the stars and the other parts of the universe became free from sorrows and weakness, while the Earth was bound by them. Was this freedom secured by the stars solely through the grace of God or by strenuous efforts made by the souls resident in them? This omission somewhat obscures the issue of retributive justice. This world has been so far treated by God as Australia was treated by the British Government which sent out prisoners to live as colonists. The colonists have turned Australia into a place better than England. Aurobindo will turn this world into a better heaven than the existing one.

. Leaving aside dialecticism, which is out of place in the solution of imperial problems, it may be said, in a

general way, that Aurobindo's scheme of salvation is intriguing, though it can not be denied that it has serious defects. It assumes that the disease is chronic and inherent, and proposes a radical cure, and not merely a remedy for a momentary crisis. This is admirable. Its defects are (1) that the remedy cannot be immediately effective and that, therefore, the crisis may end in tragedy at unawares, (2) that it is intended only to bring a right to salvation and not the actual consummation of it, (3) that the salvation is partial only and (4) that it makes real consummation depend upon individual effort made for the benefit of the individual ; in short, that it makes salvation an individualized aim of life, while it proposes to bring collective relief for entire humanity.

It will take millions of years to bring down the unmanifested or uncreated heaven. Negotiation with the Transcendental God will be necessary. The emissaries will have to educate themselves for holding this extraordinary negotiation. The number of carriers and camp followers must be large. Aurobindo himself will lead the mission. He is educating himself and his assistants and his retinue at the Pondicherry asram. But he is an old man, approaching the seventieth year of age, and he may expire long before the preparations are completed. If the ascent to Mount Everest or Gourisankar requires so much preparation, we may easily imagine the magnitude and difficulty and danger of preliminary efforts that the climbing of the Transcendental peak of Kailas will inevitably demand. Can Aurobindo be expected to complete the arrangements within his life-time? We are told, "all depends on the teacher and ends with his life-time". (P6, *The Teaching and the Asram*). He will no doubt be reborn, but there is no knowing when and where he will come to life again. If he is reborn in Russia he may become an atheist, for the atmosphere of that country and the blood of her people are surcharged with atheism. Nara, the great ancient sage was reborn as Noren in the family of Viswanath Dutta under similar

circumstances. Besides, immediately on Aurobindo's death the asram may close down, and the sathaks lose every vestige of the spiritual urge. I may note here in passing that Aurobindo himself expects to be reborn in Russia or some other anti-spiritual country (Rebirth and Personality—*The Riddle*), though this expectation is unwarranted by the ancient scriptures, as interpreted by Dr. Radhakrishnan in his **"Idealist View of Life"**.

5.

The most serious defect of the scheme is that the new heaven, when brought down on earth, will not touch the ground, but will stop and settle five feet above it. This will be a great disadvantage for humanity. All the full-statured men will have to stoop, and the stooping habit will perpetuate and deepen the inferiority-complex, and make it difficult for men to become supermen, who alone will be allowed to climb to the roof of the new heaven. A man can not be a superman at pleasure, any more than a man can expose his right cheek to one who has smitten him on the left. Christ brought for mankind the right to ascend to heaven. But it was not an usufructuary right; it was a right subject to impossible reservations. Every man must individually qualify himself for actual possession of heaven. In the same way, the new heaven brought down by Aurobindo will not be accessible to every individual man. He must qualify himself individually for actual enjoyment of heavenly bliss. Christ also wanted to bring down heaven on earth for mankind in the same way, but nobody accepted the onerous restrictions, placed upon actual possession and enjoyment, in the shape of individual qualifications. To turn the right cheek to the aggressor, to give the cloak to the robber, to love every neighbour and to turn away from his wife—these were considered by the Jews to be impossible conditions, and the mission of Christ ended in a fiasco. Will Aurobindo's scheme have better success? If Christ had succeeded in bringing down heaven on earth, the heaven would have remained untenanted, for nobody

could comply with the conditions imposed by Christ. Surely if Aurobindo and his sadhaks succeed in bringing down heaven on earth, it will remain untenanted, for there is no human being who can fulfil the conditions of actual possession, viz, the abrogation of animal, economic, aesthetic and intellectual life. Aurobindo himself has so far abdicated none of these forms of life. He still eats and possesses private property, he writes aesthetically and thinks intellectually. Indeed, far from giving up his intellectual life he has strengthened it enormously, so that Dr. M. N. Sircar is able to introduce his essay on Aurobindo's synthetic light with an extraordinary encomium on his intellectual activity. He has gained supramental light without losing his intellectual; he has got clean water in his bucket without throwing out the dirty water, because his bucket is elastic enough to hold both kinds of water. But can the bucket prevent the two kinds of water from getting mixed? Aurobindo's mind is half-clear, half-cloudy, and this is evident from the texts of his philosophy. My object has been to expose this mixture as concisely and as clearly as practicable.

6.

A more serious defect of Aurobindo's scheme is that he seeks for partial remedy or salvation. He wants supramental light, which is below cosmic light, which again is below transcendental light, which last is absolutely necessary for complete salvation, final realization and achievement of Ultimate Truth. Aurobindo emphatically warns us against the folly of seeking for ultimate Reality which is too high and vast for any ideal to envisage. He himself is determined to keep out this Reality until he has realized the full consummation of self-consciousness.

The ancient Rishis out of ignorance sought for the ultimate Reality direct with intuitive light, because they had no experience of supramental light. They failed egregiously and are still wandering in this world as little gods, daityas and hostile beings with the object of bringing

confusion into neo-tantric *yoga*, and frustrating it, for the Overmental or Intuitive zone is the land of half-lights and half-truths. Aurobindo and his sadhaks being encountered by these daityas and hostile Vedantic spirits are trying to climb the supramental plane "through a narrower but surer path".

But though thus thwarted, Aurobindo is sanguine about achieving transcendental consciousness, without which he can not bring down the unmanifested supermind and heaven for his own benefit and that of his sadhaks and of mankind in general. "Our business is to bring down heaven on earth for ourselves and for mankind". It is unintelligible what benefit he can personally enjoy from supramental light, when he has already obtained possession of transcendental light, which will be absolutely necessary for bringing down supramental light.

This sort of blunder is due to the mixture of dirty and clean water in his bucket, of intellectual thought and supramental realization in his brain.

7.

But all metaphysicians are birds of a feather. They agree to differ and differ to agree. In one thing they have complete agreement. They are all optimists. They all pretend to be free from the restraints of time. To them centuries are like seconds, and millennia like minutes. Years and hours have the same value for them. Aurobindo has warned his sadhaks not to be in haste for supramental light, for they have the whole (half?) of eternity before them. Radhakrishnan has warned all statesmen not to be in a hurry to get rid of the crisis, for they have before them ten million years, viz, the period which the Sun will require to cool down to the cataclysm of cold. (p. 53, *Kalki or The Future of Civilization*).

The difference between ancient and modern prophets chiefly lies in the fact that, while the ancient ones, with

few exceptions, wanted complete salvation or final realization, modern prophets almost entirely wish for partial salvation and even seem to be afraid of ultimate realization. In place of *Nirvana*, *Mahanirvana*, *Brahmanirvana*, they want the unity of humanity or transformation of man into superman or ideal man or cosmic man, but always man. They want music in place of noise, peace in place of war, friendship in place of hostility. At the same time, they want to enrich the *Lila* by creative energy, in perfect forgetfulness of the fact that creative energy is the cause of all our misfortune. Creative energy has reduced God from infinity to finitude, from formlessness to formfulness, from all-consciousness to self-consciousness, from the One into the Many, from the Absolute into the relative, from the impersonal into the personal, from perfection into imperfection, even from spirit into matter, indivisible spirit into divisible matter. Creative energy has disintegrated the integral soul, differentiated the faculties, and caused psychological confusion amounting to spiritual chaos. Creative energy has built machinery which has subordinated civilization to its own whims. We have become slaves of the machine created by us, instead of dominating it. Oswald Spengler calls the machine the Technique, and everybody should read his "**Man and Technics**". Final realization means final stoppage of creative energy. But can we stop the dynamism of creative energy, divine energy transmitted to man, whose function is to transform the one into the many the uniform into the multiform, monotony into symphony and symphony into noise ; peace into war, war into great war, duel into tribal war, tribal war into national war, national war into international war, international war into the war of humanity, the war of *each against each and all* ? Creative energy transforms all-consciousness into self-consciousness, universal love into self-love, and makes the self descend from the transcendental to the cosmic, from the cosmic to the individualized self, and translates the self into the ego. These constitute the fall.

Salvation means the retransformation of the, later

created consequent into its earlier created antecedent in a series back to the uncreated One ; for example, noise into symphony, symphony into monotony, monotony into perfect silence, which is also transcendence, absolute, infinite, eternal. The truth is that salvation in its partial form means transformation of the more developed into the less developed form of the created, and finally into the uncreated One. Beyond the uncreated One is the Destiny, the primeval nothing or void or *sunya*. Salvation in the long run means regress or partial withdrawal from the comprehensible to the incomprehensible, from the real to the ideal, from the conceptual world to the supramental, from the physical to the spiritual, from multiplicity and multiformity towards unity and uniformity, from the relative to the absolute, from divergence to convergence, from disruption to integration, from separatism to unionism, from war to peace, from dynamism to quiescence, from adventurous life to home-internment, from the wandering habit to blissful self-imprisonment.

Salvation means destruction, partial destruction making for complete destruction. It means the improvement, leading to complete destruction, of the *Lila*, which was started by God for an indefinite period under the urge of divine discontent towards impure pleasure. The object of partial salvation is to purify this pleasure, to turn it from happiness to bliss, from the intoxicated *sukha* to the sober serenity of ananda, from the expansiveness of amusement to the concentration of beatitude, from the accursed dynamic life on the surface to blessed rest in the bottomless depth of transcendental consciousness.

Salvation is thus anti-divine, anti-creative. Psychologically, it is equivalent to rebellion against God. The universal postulate of prophethood is that, having enjoyed the *lila* for a pretty long time, God has become tired of it, and being unable by His creative power, now reduced by over-exercise, to throw down the

drop-scene on the stage, is seeking for human co-operation in the extremity of despair. The underlying idea is that the destruction of the *lila* will be welcome to man as well as to God. But the truth is that the majority of men do not like to be saved, except from the obtrusive importunateness of the prophets. Has any prophet ever succeeded in inducing more than a small fragment of humanity, of consciousness, to accept his message or to regard him as an accredited messenger? The truth is that *lila* is not more than half-advanced in beauty and intoxicativeness, and no prophet can succeed who does not help man to enrich the *lila*, far from impoverishing it. The political prophets of Western Civilization are more welcome than the spiritual prophets. Has any prophet ever had a larger following than Mussolini and Hitler? They are truly creative giants. What do they create? They create, that is, develop the *lila*. Who developed the *lila* more than Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon? Krishna is perhaps the greatest prophet of both love and strife. He carried the *lila* of love to perfection at Gokul. He carried the *lila* of strife to what was long supposed to be perfection at Kurukshetra. Who does not worship Krishna in India? Mussolini and Hitler have got followers even in exploited countries like India. Buddha and Christ came to impoverish the *lila*. Mahomet alone among spiritual prophets enriched the *lila*, and his mission has been more successful. Though Christ wanted to impoverish the *lila*, Christians have always enriched it. Hence Christianity and Islam are thriving so well, while Hinduism and Buddhism are decaying. The Japanese are Shintoes, not Buddhists. Aurobindo is a combination of Nietzsche and Christ, of personal consummation and self-surrender, a complete humbug.

8.

Western civilization is creative. Mysticism is destructive. It is therefore more religious. Eastern civilization is destructive and is fast losing its following. It is ungodlike at core. It wants to destroy what God has

purposely created. It wants to destroy the *lila* slowly but surely. It wants to unite the multiple, the multiform, the discordant and the divergent. It wants convergence and concentration, against the will of God, who transformed the One into the Many, the uniform into the multiform, the concordant into the discordant, the absolute into the relative. We are told that He made these transformations in the early days, but in His old age He is repenting them, and wants the collaboration of man to restore the *status quo ante*. This collaboration is called religion. Religion is thus founded upon blind faith in the genuineness of this divine repentance. To prove the genuineness of this repentance, we are told that God lives in concealment, incognito, in disguise within us, and that with God things are not what they seem. God indeed has been more vilipended and desecrated by religious prophets than by sceptics. Aurobindo is one of them.

9.

To say that the world is passing through a crisis is to admit that the world has, at least for some time, long or short, long rather than short, been suffering from disease. When the disease comes to a crisis the physician does not so much think of the disease as of the impending danger. His immediate and imperative duty is to prevent death and not to cure the disease. The abandonment of the scheme of complete salvation and final realization in favour of partial redemption envisages a gloomy state of things. Instead of seeking for ultimate truth and final realization, Aurobindo seeks for personal consummation for himself and an intermediate light for mankind.

Supramental consciousness is not the final consciousness. This is clear from the statement that though our aim stops at the achievement of the supramental consciousness, it must not be forgotten that "a farther divine progression even an infinite development is still possible". (p. 9, *The Riddle*). The world is in danger of death. Let

us first get out of the crisis by bringing down the supramental consciousness, the lowest consciousness; in the spiritual order of reality; and when the world gets out of the crisis, we shall have breathing time for thinking of the series of higher consciousness, among which the cosmic and the transcendental are two remarkable stages.

Aurobindo, as a prophet, is evidently suffering from the inferiority-complex. He is not competent to bring complete salvation for mankind and he admits it. In the enthusiasm of his defeatist temperament he even says that "the ultimate truth is too high and vast to be envisaged by man".

When he says "that he will reach and realize the transcendental consciousness to bring down the unmanifested supermind", he resorts to pure bluster. It is clear not only that he has not yet brought down the supermind wanted for arresting the course of the crisis, but is never likely to do so, under the impossible conditions adumbrated by him. He will never reach and realize the transcendental consciousness for lack of supramental consciousness, and he will never bring down the supramental for lack of transcendental consciousness. He cannot get rid of the vicious circle.

Apart from this whirl of the vicious circle, infinite development of supramental light is not to be achieved in a single life, and Aurobindo is pretty old now. He will require a number of further rebirths. But his rebirth means the closing down of the asram, for all depends upon the life-time of the Master". Who can deny that Aurobindo is deliberately deceiving his sadhaks, who want complete cure and final realization and not merely partial salvation of a comparatively low order of value? Infinite development means infinite effort carried on through infinite time to realize it. If you give one rupee to a man who expects one thousand rupees from you, is it not more likely that he will throw it back at your face than accept it and placidly leave your presence? Next, consider the price paid for the rupee. One must give up

all that is near and dear to him to get supramental light, —his animal life, his economic life, his intellectual life and his aesthetic life. The remedy is worse than the malady. It is the work of a bad physician, spiritually called metaphysician.

Can Aurobindo induce Dr. Tagore to give up his aesthetic life in exchange for supramental light? Will Aurobindo himself ever give up his intellectual life as the price paid for supramental consciousness? Will his sadhaks give up their animal life for that purpose?

A prophet must try to bring complete salvation or give up his prophethood. Aurobindo has made matters worse by confusing complete salvation with partial salvation. Let him say definitely and unmistakably that he wants one or the other, not both. I want to go to Calcutta. I do not wish to stay at Goalundo or Khulna. Goalundo is like the existing supermind. Khulna like the unmanifested supermind. We go to Goalundo through the overmental zone, we go to Khulna through the narrower but surer passage. The Padma line is unsafe. The wheel route is safe. Simile cannot be carried far. Aurobindo carries it down to Sealdah.

10.

The greatest blunder made by Aurobindo is that in his philosophy there exist, not one but two ultimate truths and two final realizations. He speaks of two supramental consciousnesses, each containing the seed of an ultimate truth. The two consciousnesses are (1) the existing supermind and (2) the unmanifested supermind. The unmanifested supermind is different from the existing supermind. It is a triumphant new self-discovery of the Divine. The difference between the two superminds must be great. The unmanifested supermind exists in conditions that are not elsewhere. To lay emphasis on the difference Aurobindo asks the pertinent question: "What would be the utility of a supramental creation on earth, if

it were just the same thing as a supramental creation on the supramental plane ?”

The existing supramental consciousness is the result of evolution accelerated by *yoga*. The unmanifested supramental consciousness is achieved by *yoga* alone. The first is bound to descend on earth by the force of evolution to create a superman race. The second is not so bound. “Each of them is beyond the ignorance, and conversion of consciousness is no longer needed”. Each of them develops in its own line, the two lines do not meet at any intermediate point. They cannot meet, for they require no conversion or convergence. There is at least no mention of such convergence. It follows that the two lines of development or progress ultimately end in two transcendental consciousnesses, two absolute truths. (*Reductio ad absurdum*.) Ultimate truth is not the Sealdah Station. From Sealdah the Governor goes to Government house in a motor car. The coolie walks to a bustee.

11.

That the world is not what we would like it to be is evident from experience. But ‘world’ is a small word thrown at a vast object. It is a complex manifold. It has infinite sides or faces or aspects. To change it for the better in its wholeness is an impossible adventure. The endeavour to improve one aspect of it brings injurious complications into one or more of the other aspects. This world by itself is too vast and varied for human comprehension. And to add to our difficulties we have invented another world and inter-locked the two. This world may be called man’s world, and the other, Superman’s world. Mind is the guiding principle for man’s world, and supermind for the other world. The two minds are quite as different as the two worlds. The mind has no admittance to the superman’s world, but the supermind is free to move in man’s world. What is the meaning of this freedom ? Can the supermind change

this world into its own world? That the mind cannot change the supramental world is evident from the fact that it has no admittance to it. But the supermind being free to come into this world is supposed to have power enough to change it in whole or in part. We have no experience of wholesale change. As to partial change, our experience is that the supermind tries to introduce the principles of government which prevail in its own native world, and makes man's world more complicated than it ever was before. The British have introduced many British institutions into India. Have they simplified the administration of India, or complicated it? India cannot be transformed into England and Indians cannot be completely anglicised. At the utmost a few Indians may be partially anglicised. Aurobindo and his sadhaks at Pondicherry may be supramentalized, but what about man's world as a whole? Aurobindo has tried to prove that it can be wholly and fully supramentalized. But he has failed to convince us. Particularly, he has failed to convince Dr M. N. Sircar who thinks that the supramentalization of man's world may go on increasing, but that it can never find its end, which means that the ideal of unity of humanity is a fiction.

12.

On the other hand, consider the risks to which individual supermen coming from the other world will expose themselves by living in a new environment in this world.

The history of religion or mutual migration between the two worlds unmistakably shows that all adventurers who have come to man's world have lost their distinctive qualities and have become human. While, on the other hand, there is no evidence that any man has ever been able to find admittance in superman's world. If Aurobindo can claim any credit as a research scholar in metaphysics, it is due to the discovery of the fact that not a single man, sage or saint, has so far been allowed

to land at any port in the other world for want of pass-port. That pass-port is supramental light. No Rishi, no prophet, no *apta*, no seer, no man has had down to the present-day any experience of supramental light or vision. A few of them, it is conceded, may have seen glimpses of it shining in the distant realm of the absolute, glimpses not merely inadequate but deceitful, tempting men to seek for nirvana, and not immortality or Eternal Self-consciousness and Self-consummation. Whoever tried to find admittance in the other world was told by the gate-keeper to go back and complete his experience of man's world by rebirths, in infinite number of rebirths. Rebirth means rejuvenation intended to facilitate the acquisition of new experience, in new careers of life.

Aurobindo's philosophy may be briefly summed up as follows :— (1) Our ideal is to unite mankind. (2) The unity of mankind is impossible without supramental light. (3) Supramental light is impossible unless and until every man has completed his experience of this world. (4) Complete experience is impossible without an infinite number of rebirths. (5) Therefore, the ideal of the unity of mankind cannot be achieved without an infinite number of rebirths. The question is, "Has Aurobindo completed his experience of this world by the necessary number of rebirths?" There is also the other question whether any of his disciples has passed through the requisite number of rebirths to complete their experience of man's world. The Yogasram at Pondicherry is futile, if either the master or the disciples is or are disqualified for supramental light on account of inadequate experience. The proper course for Aurobindo is to close the asram and wait for the day when he will have complete experience by rebirth, of man's world. Of course *yoga* cannot supply or complete this experience. The aim of Indian *yoga* is to unite this world with the other, man with God. The aim of Aurobindo's *yoga* is to destroy this world and to substitute in its place the other world.

13.

How is man's world to be destroyed ? Man is a living being. He has several kinds of life, viz, animal life, economic life, social life, aesthetic life and intellectual life. Man must make a resurgence above these kinds of life. He can rise above animal life by ceasing to eat, drink and reproduce the species. He can rise above social life by ceasing to mix with men, and above aesthetic life by ceasing to seek for beauty, that is by devitalising creative energy. He can rise above intellectual life by ceasing to think, and above economic life by ceasing to earn money. I have no reason to doubt that Aurobindo has advanced far in destroying his animal life. He eats very little food and does not reproduce the species at all. He has curbed his social life to a large extent. He lives a comparatively solitary life. But as to aesthetic and intellectual life there is good reason to believe that they have been strengthened rather than weakened by *yoga*. Dr. K. Ram Chandra has given a succinct account of the developing aesthetic life of the Yogasram. Dr. Mahendranath Sircar is an excellent witness of the growing life of the intellect in Aurobindo. Dr. Sircar is supported by Dr. Radhakrishnan, who says, "among the present-day Indian thinkers Sri Aurobindo Ghosh is perhaps the most accomplished." Dr Sarker says, "The thought-currents that he is radiating through his facile pen are proofs that he is still vigorously thinking", that is to say, living man's life, as contra-distinguished from superman's life, which loathes intellectual life as an abomination, for the intellect is the dwelling place of incomplete truth and falsehood. It seems from these testimonies that in the search after supramental light Aurobindo is going from bad to worse, not from good to better. Instead of approaching supramental light, he is running away from it.

14.

Supramental light is neither a fixed quantity nor

is its quality uniform. It is not a non-progressive thing: "A farther divine progression, even an infinite development is still possible."

There are two kinds of supramental light, viz (1) the light that already exists on the supramental plane and (2) the yet unmanifested light. Aurobindo was for a long time undecided as to which of the two lights he should bring down. He has now made up his mind. He must bring down the unmanifested light, which is superior to the manifested one. But how does he know that the one is superior to the other? How can an unmanifested thing be known at all?

Aurobindo's philosophy is a black cloud, through which nothing can be seen. The blackness of the cloud is made blacker by the exuberance of intellectual light which he is cultivating with growing vigour as certified by two great philosophers, like Radhakrishnan and Mohendranath Sircar. The more he thinks the less he sees. He is becoming a great thinker and a poor seer. His philosophy is a mixture of supramental light and intellectual darkness, and the dimmer the light the thicker the darkness. Dr. Radhakrishnan is a thinker, because "thought is useful though not true." He loathes intuition, because "it is true but not useful." All of us ought to prefer usefulness to truth if the world and civilization is to be saved from the crises through which it is passing at present. Aurobindo is strictly following this cult of utility.

15,

Of all the works written by Aurobindo the best is **"The Riddle of this world."** Has it solved the riddle? If not, why not? He has not solved it for the simple reason that the intelligence which alone can solve it is "a cosmic, not an individualized human intelligence". "Cosmic intelligence sees in larger spaces, it has another vision and cognition, other terms of consciousness than human reason and feeling". Let us then wait for

cosmic intelligence. But what is cosmic intelligence ? It is, the intelligence of the cosmic godhead, as distinguished from the transcendental god and the individualized god. Does not Aurobindo try to realize this cosmic intelligence ? He can easily realize it, but he loathes it. He prefers personal consummation to cosmic realization. Is not cosmic consciousness a higher form of supramental consciousness ? Yes, it is so ; but it has a monstrous defect. It makes man a slave of God, "a mere Channel of the universal power" and deprives him of the personal and divinely individual consummation. Will the riddle then remain unsolved for ever ? Aurobindo will solve it when he has attained individual consummation to the fullest extent, and has then time to attain cosmic consciousness, which at present he loathes. Will he not surrender himself to the cosmic God before that ? No, he thinks it would be unworthy of him to surrender himself to the cosmic God before personal experience and consummation has been completed. Has he not said, "the whole principle of this *yoga* is to give oneself entirely to the Divine alone and to nobody and nothing else" ? Yes, but this surrender should not be made prematurely, but only after self-consciousness has been fully slackened and deadened by age and experience. No Mussalman kills a heifer for bakra-id, but only an old cow that has ceased to calve and to give milk.

16.

It is not a good thing for a learned man to be a prophet. People are able to ascribe to his prophethood what he discovers by his learning, and to his learning what he discovers by his divine inspiration. In him the man is as prominent as God. Truth and falsehood are necessarily blended in him. He unconsciously moves from intellectual falsehood to intuitive truth and back from intuitive to intellectual falsehood, from *pratyaksa* to *aporoksa Jnan* and back so rapidly that he comes at length to identify

them. Empiricism is so thoroughly established in his consciousness that he not only fails to shake it off, but comes gradually to assimilate intuitive experience to intellectual knowledge. This, I believe, is a fair account of the situation in which Aurobindo finds him. He is disgusted by intellectual knowledge and he finds intuitive experience to be a slightly improved, but not an adequate mode of discovering truth. Hence arose the suggestion of the possibility of a higher light. It is however a mere possibility which is not merely not convincing, but too vague and foggy to be satisfactorily explained, particularly to men not privileged to see ghosts and visions. Mysticism is a divine gift or devil's curse in the other parts of the world. In India it is also a creative art. Mystic visions are ordinarily produced or helped by drugs or distortions in the organism of the human body, particularly in the respiratory system. The distortion may come in the course of disease. The intelligent mystic catches the distortion on the wing and cleverly makes experiment with it to turn mysticism into an art. The distortions are generally painful, but when it is patiently borne to the end, rapturous ecstasy follows. But the distortions leave permanent marks on the organism and mystics are seldom long-lived. Ramkrishna is an excellent illustration of the principles of the art of mysticism. He was loth to teach the art to Mathur Babu. He forbade Noren to practise it. Naren found the ecstasy worth having in spite of the preparatory pain. But the pain and ecstasy are matters of personal concern. They bring no good to humanity. Most men would die of the pain, and experience no joy. It is said that in a few cases the pain gradually disappears and the joy becomes continuous. Some people suppose that their joy can be made eternal, under the name of ananda. This ananda is identifiable with final realization or salvation. It is, to all intents and purposes, a case of nirvana, both for the mystic and for his neighbours. But this eternal ananda is a chimera, a fiction, a figment of imagination. Man has no experience, empirical or intuitive, of any

individual having ever enjoyed it. Of course, empirical experience is negatived by the idea of eternity attached to the ananda.

It is said Aurobindo has discovered a method by creative art of eliminating the pain from the ecstasy and this enables him to live in good health with prospects of great longevity. He is naturally proud of this possession. But how does this concern his disciples, whom he deceives into the belief that, by following the master's art, they can similarly enjoy the blessing of ananda wholly isolated from pain? Their inherited and acquired qualities, their spiritual experience and consciousness taken in its entirety are certainly different from his own: What can be the justification for inviting them to the asram and submitting them to practices which, he as a broad-minded learned man ought to know, cannot be successful, at least in the majority of cases?

I have called Aurobindo an impostor. He deliberately deceives his sadhaks. He is deliberately deceiving the public by holding out utopian ideals, such as the unity of humanity or the supramentalization of the human race, which have nothing to do with the ananda which he enjoys by the creative art of mysticism. The mystic art for the enjoyment of personal ananda should be in all honesty dissociated from learned theories about the happy prospects of the human race. If the mystic practices bring truths about God and the universe and pragmatic ideals, the disciples are at liberty to enjoy them to their hearts' content. Why lure them with the political prospect of bringing to the world the blessings of unity and love? The ananda of mysticism can be enjoyed only by each individual practising it separately. Why try to mix up individual ananda with the collective ananda of the human race? Why hold out the suggestion of bringing down Heaven on Earth and raise the false hope that, when heaven has been so brought down, *yoga* would be unnecessary and every man from the lowest to the highest will enjoy the ananda of universal salvation, from which safeguards and reservations will be wholly

withdrawn ? The utmost that can be done is what Christ did. He opened the gate of heaven, and allowed only those to enter who could satisfy him that he had strictly followed the principles and statutory provisions of the Sermon in the Mount. Salvation in the long run must assert its individualistic discrimination. Nirvana is not an indiscriminate massacre of human souls and their burial in the universal spirit.

The truth is Aurobindo's philosophy has nothing to do with his mysticism. The two things are entirely different and should be kept separate. Why does he mix them up ? The yoga cannot unite mankind. The philosophy cannot bring ecstatic raptures ; it cannot bring ultimate truth. The philosophy is intellectual. The yoga is spiritual. The philosophy of the unity of mankind is common to spiritualists and naturalists. It is no monopoly of spiritualism or yogism. But Aurobindo makes it appear that the truth of human unity can come only through yoga. He wants to create a sect of spiritual humanism, different from the naturalistic sect of it. His object is to divide mankind, not unite them. Whatever unity exists in humanity is the work of statesmen and scientists and not of spiritualists. Spiritualism preaches brotherhood, but the brotherhood becomes murderous when worldly interests come to be considered. What did the Christian priesthood do to prevent the great war or to bring it to an end ? On the contrary, they did every thing to aggravate it. A cry has arisen among spiritualists to separate congregational religion from personal religion. It is said "religion is every man's own concern ; and never discloses himself to an assemblage collectively. Every man must separately see Him in his own heart. Aurobindo is trying to create a congregation, whose first duty will be to assail and assassinate those who deny the yogic foundation of human unity. He will not allow people to love one another until they have got supramental light, until he and his disciples have brought down the unmanifested supermind upon

the Earth. Supramental light alone can unite mankind ; cosmic light which stands a little above it enslaves them. Beware of cosmic light, and take care that your supramental light does not stealthily climb into cosmic level. That way lies slavery. Slavery is slavery whether you serve the cotton-planter, the tea-planter or the cosmic God. Aurobindo has solemnly warned us thus :—

“If it is the cosmic Godhead that I realize, losing in it all personal self, I become a mere channel of the universal power and there is no personal or divinely individual consummation for me” (p78, *The Riddle*).

In seeking for human unity you must not abdicate your own personality. Surrender yourself to God by all means, but safeguard your personal dignity. You may cooperate with God, but only with the reservation that He will not treat you like a slave or a mere instrument or treat you as a non-entity.

Here lies Aurobindoism in a nutshell. It is the quintessence of his philosophy, of his yoga, of his mysticism. He is not a *monist* but a *moneyist*.

K. C. S.

CLOUD AND CLEAR SKY

MY LETTER TO SRI AUROBINDO

K. C. Sen

Madaripur

Sri Aurobindo,

I am interested in the principles of the neo-tantric doctrine. I call it neo-tantric because it is an improvement on old tantrism, which is a cult involved in much that is occult. Evidently supramental light did not exist when it was most in vogue.

Some of my nearest relations are Sadhaks of the new school. It behoves me to ensure that they do not misunderstand your views. My son P. C. Sen, my nephews N. N. Das Gupta, A. S. Das Gupta and R. K. Sen are among them. R. C. Palit is an intimate friend. I have sometimes held conversation with them and others. None of them seems to have a clear, coherent, comprehensive idea of the doctrine. They say that they follow it because they are immediately benefited by it. They are not interested in the nature of the final realisa-

tion or the ideal to be pursued by way of preparation. The benefit they refer to seems to be extra-rational or emotional. They say it gives them immediate calm and peace and delight and equanimity; and they feel that they are superior to what they were before, and therefore spiritually superior to their neighbours, and they feel most comfortable. Their spirituality is, of course, not very deep. They mistake pride for a spiritual consciousness. They told me particularly that it makes for a dynamic life in this world as well as in the other, and that therefore they have been instructed not to quit their economic avocations. They assure me that it has improved their general morality with immense rapidity. But they do not know that "a Sadhak of the *Sakti-marga* ought to be a Sadhak only" and that the Sadhana runs as a stream through a number of rebirths, to be in any sense fruitful. That they believe that the Sadhana is like a course of university study leading to a degree is obvious. They do not see that they are non-collegiate students, and are therefore under a disadvantage. They do not know what true morality means, that nature is non-moral and that morality consists "in acting for the best according to one's lights", or that every man has lights of his own which are varying from hour to hour. What they really mean is that a public servant need not, even ought not to resign his post to become a good Sadhak. They do not know that if a public servant acted according to his lights, irrespective of the wishes or lights of his superior officers he would run the risk of losing his appointment ten times every

month. They do not know that without Siddhi and perfection of the Adhar no good work is possible. Has any of your spare-time Sadhaks ever brought to your notice difficulties of this kind, experienced by them, and asked for advice? Do not your off-time Sadhaks abruptly exchange their own lights for those of their employers in cases of clash? Does any of your Sadhaks belong to the executive branch of the Provincial Civil Service? Has he ever acquitted an accused person when his boss told him to convict him? Does he care more for justice than for the comforts of his wife and children, a miscellaneous lot of unknown spirits that have gathered into his family from unknown parts of the earth, where 10 or 20 years ago they, for aught he knows, lived undesirable lives as smugglers, swindlers, profiteers and exploiters, miscreants and blackguards of various types and orders? When he convicts and sends a person to jail for 2 years, does he think of his wife and children as dear to him as his own are to himself? It has been well-said that there can be no Karma without Siddhi and no Siddhi without supramental truth. When will the off-time Sadhaks learn all this? They want to enjoy both the worlds at the same time. I have nothing to say against the Asram Sadhaks who are trying their best to follow the Yoga putting off Karma by a countless number of rebirths for the purpose of achieving Siddhi of the Will and perfection of the Adhar, provided they do not think, at each rebirth, of "creating new types of personality for themselves" or "developing different capacities and different lives and careers," and provided they do not forget that their

immortality which is at their disposal, can be extended to the very terminal point of the universal *Lila*. Why should they be in haste when they have the whole of eternity before them? Do your off-time Sadhaks think of immortality and eternity and their ramifying implications?

II.

IT is a satisfactory feature that the Sadhaks try to reduce their animal life. They eat comparatively simple food in small quantity. This is admirable, though it is not a distinctive feature, for all reflective religions prescribe moderation in eating and drinking. In the present age economic and sanitary considerations often obscure the situation. The Sadhaks also try to reduce their reproductive enjoyments. It is however difficult to give any positive opinion on this point. Nature and Art have provided means for isolating these enjoyments from their visible evidence, introducing an element of occultism in conduct. On the whole they show no tendency to reduce their economic life. Their aesthetic life is strengthened rather than weakened, thanks to the influence of Dr. Tagore, which outweighs all religious consideration. Indeed aestheticism has been turned into a religion by itself by atheists like Russell and artists like Tagore. It is called creative growth. The meditation room of spare-time Sadhaks is really a pleasant place. Photographs, artificial flowers, carpets, reclining chairs and natural flowers are the principal items in the decoration. Some of them cultivate flower gardens. As to the intellectual life, it seems they are more successful in following your instructions. They soon lose interest in

politics and nationalism, in general literature and science, in social problems and history and antiquarian research. They carry on their official functions, however, with as much intellectual acumen as before. On the whole I do not think they are perceptibly advancing towards super-mankind, which calls for the relinquishment of all the four types of life mentioned above.

III.

SADHAKS of this type are scattered all over India. But I think they prevail most in Bengal where the earth-consciousness is comparatively dull, having passed through a period of abnormal evolution during the last half a century or so. You do not seem to ask them to stay at the Asram for *viva voce* instruction. Indeed if all the Sadhaks were to do so the Asram could not find accommodation even for ten per cent of them, and luckily they do not wish to exchange their mixed life for one of exclusive Sadhana.

The post office, the telegraph and the radio have provided ready means of communicating religious instruction. This is an advantage of which our ancient Rishis never dreamed. On the contrary they hid themselves in forests, probably because they valued self-transcendence more than self-expression. The acquisitive will was stronger in them than the distributive.

You have so far, I suppose, taken advantage of the post office only. I understand your Sadhaks send you questions and you reply to them; and copies of your replies are distributed to all the Sadhaks or to the

most prominent among them. I understand also that you reply to questions asked by outsiders, provided they are not inspired by irreverent attitude or by malevolent curiosity. This is an advantage of great value to those who without positively committing themselves wish to understand the doctrine. This is an advantage of great value for all.

The postal method of instruction has disadvantages also. Much time is wasted and attention is often diverted. At least old emphases on some points are lost and new emphases on other points arise. What is worse is that the Sadhaks have no opportunity of clearing up obscurities by subsidiary or supplementary questions somewhat of the nature of respectful cross-examination. Such questions might be interpreted as inspired by a controversial spirit, and the Sadhak would naturally eschew them out of the fear of giving offence. It is a question whether to acquire knowledge is better than to impart it. But both are difficult. Emotional elements have to be eschewed on both sides. My experience of Gurus so far has taught me that they are very sensitive about their personal dignity, and Sadhaks by their habitual self-abasement tend to strengthen their susceptibility. *Ramkrishna* took umbrage when one out of nine or ten youthful visitors sat cross-legged in the wrong way on the floor while he was talking from his bed. I was one of the visitors but I was not the offender. This happened in 1879 A. D. while *Ramkrishna* was only a Vedantist, and Vedantism has subsequently been found to be an erroneous doctrine

with its quiescent God and undynamic salvation and treacherous intuition (*Aparoksa Jnan*)

The most striking disadvantage is that the questions which your Sadhaks ask are often sporadic, discrete and fragmentary, while you naturally try to avoid irrelevance, as far as possible. The questions are not inserted in the public replies, and that is a great disadvantage for the readers. In the absence of direct audile communication these disadvantages have to be tolerated. Christ went about preaching and doing good. That method also had disadvantages. There were no stenographers and there was great danger of mistranscription. The result is that nobody accepts the teaching, and the good done by him has been forgotten. He preached the father-hood of God, and the brotherhood of man has become ethnological. The love of neighbour was preached, but neighbourhood is now limited to the frontiers of the family, and the family is disappearing. He preached against adultery, and marriage has been nearly abolished. He preached against murder, and massacre has been substituted for it, and so on. He preached against self-defence against a slap, and defensive weapons of a tremendous nature are invented in the shape of explosives, poison-gas, aeroplanes and tanks—tits of boulders for tats of brickbats.

IV.

DO you ask your Sadhaks (off-time) to visit you occasionally ? If so, for what purpose ? To get their doubts and difficulties cleared ? I understand your Sadhaks visit the Asram for ultra-rational purposes, viz., to have

Darsan of you once or twice a year to keep up their religious enthusiasm. I understand you discourage the *Darsan* practice as far as practicable, but the more you disparage it the greater is the volume of visitation. I am told you have set apart two or three days in the year for *Darsan*. Even this seems to be a concession to illusion and superstition. Some of your *Sadhaks* go with their family, and regard the visit as a sort of pilgrimage, something calculated to produce a momentary aesthetic excitement mistaken for spiritual inspiration. Hindu superstition has been very much strengthened by the railway system. This seems to be one of the mysterious ways of the *Lila*. The unconscious ways of the author of the *Lila* are more instructive than his conscious ways, that is, his ways of which we are directly conscious.

I think I should introduce myself as an old man of seventy-four, enjoying a pension for service in the provincial executive branch. If the *Lila*, the purpose of creation, has any interest for man, a subordinate magistrate has most experience of it. His life is one of intense joys and sorrows. The nature of his joys shuts the gates of the other world against him on the ground that he is already surfeited. It makes for repeated rebirths. They issue out of Karma, the nature of which brings the two worlds violently into collision. If he is intelligent enough he can easily escape from his sorrows by acting for the best not according to his own lights, but to those of a superior officer whose mission is to keep the peace, law and order for a whole district, and he keeps it by supporting vested interest, twelve years old, against

natural right which originated with the creation of the *Lila*.

V.

IT is an illusion to be proud of one's age. By age I mean the period which has elapsed since the latest rebirth, not the period which has run out of eternity since the psychic seeds or sparks started in the competitive race called the *Lila*. A young man may be really older in experience as well as in real age than an apparently old man. I have no mind to take advantage of such illusory old age in asking you questions or in making any comments or requests. At least I promise I shall not deliberately do so.

VI.

THOUGH my son is a Sadhak I am not one. But I am deeply interested in spiritual thought. I have very great respect for your learning and admiration for the fascinating way in which you express your ideas. I have carefully read "The Riddle of this world," "Lights on Yoga," "Yogic Sadhan," "Ideal and Progress," "Evolution" and "The Teaching and the Asram." The first consists of answers to questions raised by disciples and others interested in Yoga and spiritual life. The second consists of answers to queries made by disciples only. None of the interrogators seem to belong to the Asram proper. They are men who receive instruction through the post office. In "The Teaching and the Asram" there is no mention of these non-

resident disciples. I wish to distinguish between the two types of disciples. I have already said I have not much to say against resident disciples. They seem to be in earnest regarding the other world and what it is like. They have surrendered most of all that is considered valuable in this world for the purpose of enjoying what makes the other so desirable. They may be self-deceived, but there is depth in their conviction. They are not rogues. They are not tentative experimentalists.

Have the non-resident, wandering disciples received formal *Diksa*? What is the precise nature of the relation between them and the Asram? What is the significance of these people in the ensemble? "The Teaching and the Asram" are linked together. The non-resident disciples are excluded. At the same time so far as the public are concerned they seem to be an important factor in the growth of the teaching. It is they that have made "The Riddle" and "Lights" possible. It is they that mix with the public and act as advertisements. They are publicity officers. They are *liaison* agents also. They seem to be an army of irregulars, recruiting agents, conscribers, garden *Sardars* and Gaya and Puri *Pandas*, who used to pounce upon unwary simpletons in the pre-railway days, and still prowl in remote villages in the country-side to induce people to save their *derelict* ancestors, and to save themselves from rebirth. "The man who has seen the Dwarf in the chariot has conquered rebirth." The *pinda* clears the forests and meadows of spirits struggling to separate themselves from their lives

and minds. Something should be done to enable people to know the true significance of these non-descriptors in the neo-tantric schema.

To my mind they are a mischievous lot, amphibious creatures sitting on the fence between this world and the other, superficially spreading neo-tantric education, but really corrupting it by false interpretations, and what is worse, by emotional and for the most part imaginative accounts of the silent, serene, stimulating, almost intoxicating, resplendent, bracing atmosphere of the Asram visited by them once or twice in their lives. If you inquire of the publishers you will know how many copies of the books on neo-tantrism have been consumed by these non-resident disciples. My sincere opinion is that one hundred resident Sadhaks are better than a million non-resident ones. These are the people who will eventually corrupt the doctrine and make it meet the fate of *Vedantism* and *Buddhism* which sought for premature *Nirvana*.

VII.

LET me illustrate the point a little. The aim of human life is to convert itself into the life of the Superman. The aim of *Yoga* is to obtain supra-mental light and bring it down to earth-consciousness. What is the meaning of life? It is the vital consciousness. What is the object of life? The object of life is to enjoy the *Lila*. What is *Lila*? It is the play of Nature. What is Nature? It is Nature that tells us

that life is comfortable and a search for improvement is futile. What is improvement of life ? An improved life is that in which the enjoyments are concentrated more densely than in ordinary life. Is it a good thing to support life ? No ; one must struggle to get rid of life and mind before death by *Yoga*, and after death, by compelling relatives to perform *Sraddha*.

This is the kind of reasoning by which they bolster up the doctrine of neo-tantrism. They are very voluble about supramental light. It is the distinctive characteristic of neo-tantrism. It enables us to attain immortality and dynamic life, while Vedantism seeks for *Nirvana* and loss of personality, and is devoid of all personal aspiration. To escape from sorrow and weakness is the aim of the Vedantist ; to conquer them is the object of the neo-tantrist ? Darwin truly hit the target when he preached survival of the fittest. But there was a little mistake in his teaching. By fitness he meant *amoral* fitness. It ought to have been spiritual fitness. What is spiritual fitness ? Spiritual fitness brings supramental light. What is supramental light ? That which enables us to see every thing in the universe including the stars and all that they contain. One of them saw a great star in the Great Bear, and saw cities in it larger than New York and London with confectionery shops, stationery shops, perfumery shops, tailoring shops with countless motor cars parked in front of them. He saw theatres, cinemas, ball-rooms, football and cricket fields, over-flowing with millions of players and spectators. Every Yogin sees what he wishes to see by supramental light, which is like Aladin's lamp. This is a

good approximation of what a Sadhak of the non-resident type thinks of the advantages of supramental light. I am unable to say anything of resident Sadhaks because I have never come in contact with any one of them.

VIII.

HOW is supramental light distinguished from intellectual light? The answer of the non-resident Sadhak is prompt and unmistakable. Intellectual light enables us to carry on animal and economic life, to seek for food and clothing for ourselves and our wives and children, to exploit our neighbours. Supramental light enables us to carry on aesthetic and intellectual life. We earn our livelihood and renew ourselves in our children by intellectual light. We enjoy the beauty of creative art by supramental light. These Sadhaks have more regard for Dr. Tagore than for their master. Supramental light enables them to see God and His dynamic activities, to see Him in His disguise and in His concealment within each human being. Supramental light enables the involved Divinity in things to release itself entirely in order to make it possible for life to manifest perfection.

Much nonsense can be gathered in this way from non-resident Sadhaks. The most astounding revelation that one of them made is that Supramental light is a purified form of intellectual light. Out of ignorance he denied the necessity of conversion. His idea is that brass can be purified into gold. Intellectual light whetted upon

the stone of faith is polished into supramental light. Supramental light is thus equivalent to intellectual light *minus* something, viz., the rust that has formed in it by the corrosive action of environment. Originally there was only supramental consciousness. When it was brought down to the mental plane it was spoiled by the corrosive influence of that plane and became mental consciousness, but it did not lose all its potentiality to recover its supramentality. It descended to the earth and became earth-consciousness ; all along it retained a slight tinge of supramentality. This tinge afterwards thickened by evolution, and is now capable of being developed and polished into perfect supramental consciousness. The earlier stages of the evolution can be passed over by Nature herself. The later stages require that Nature should have the co-operation of the mental will.

IX.

IT is an amusing phenomenon to listen to a number of disciples talking among themselves. One of them compliments another on having attained more supramental light than one's self. The compliment is promptly returned. The rest of the company express their opinion that both have got supramental light on a large scale, much larger than what they themselves possess. As to their master they are positively unanimous that he has exhausted the stock of supramental light available to man. They have no doubt that he is a Superman. He has conquered all the passions, all the six *Ripus*, all desires. He can enlarge his body by

Mahima and reduce it by *Laghima*. In his meditation he levitates himself and his head touches the ceiling. He eats very little food—3 or 4 pieces of biscuits are enough for him. He performs miracles, unseen by other men. He remains for weeks together silent and speechless. He is quite independent, and can dispense with all help from other men. What he requires is pure air and nothing else. It is confidently prophesied that he will never suffer disease or pain of any kind. He will die in the course of meditation, leaving mind and life and body behind. No outside force will ever separate him from his body. He can die by his will. He lives by it. He lives for the sake of his Sadhaks, most of whom he will take with himself when he quits his life. He will leave one of them to continue the work of mastership. The teaching will be continued in English until supramental light is brought down. It is their firm belief that the British people will one day leave India, but that the English language will never quit this land. Schools and Colleges will continue, for the knowledge imparted in them, though false, is absolutely necessary for the attainment of supramental light. Ramkrishna failed because he had no college education. Knowledge of Science and Philosophy is necessary for Yoga. The terminology of neo-tantrism could have no corresponding catalogue in Bengali or even in Sanskrit. Mind, mental, supramental, over-mental, for example, have no equivalent in Sanskrit philosophy. Who can translate "The Riddle of this world" into Bengali, Hindi or Sanskrit? Those who are trying to abolish English from Universities are trying to throw India into the darkness of night.

All the light that we possess is due to the English language, even supramental light. Only graduates and selected under-graduates can be admitted to the advantage of neo-tantrism. But the entire humanity will in the end participate in them.

Un-educated and half-educated people have nothing to do with the achievement of supramental light. It is for this reason that the neo-tantrist wants to bring down supramental light. When it is brought down, it will shine upon all alike, like the Sun. The necessity for Yoga will disappear. Nobody has to pay for sunlight. The time will soon come when nobody will have to work and meditate for supramental light. It will be had gratis by all and sundry. The Asram will fulfil itself by self-destruction.

This is the way in which Sadhaks talk among themselves. They probably repent they were born too early, for they have to work hard as Sadhaks and Yogins in their spare time which they badly need for rest and repose. They are sure they are the most over-worked people in the world, both intellectually and supramentally. At office they do intellectual work ; at home they do supramental work.

Some Sadhaks prepare separate lists of things to be learnt and works to be done supramentally and intellectually respectively. They spare supramental light as far as possible, like their master who resorts to supramental methods of teaching only when they are unavoidable. Supramental light is like differential and integral Calculus

which may be used to solve problems quickly but require hard exercise of the brain. Of course there are certain kinds of problems which cannot be solved without the help of the Calculus. Similarly there are things which cannot be seen without supramental light at all. Sometimes both the intellectual and supramental points of view are separately explained or attempted to be thus explained. Generally in cases of difficulty faith is called in to give the ultimate solution.

X.

LEAVING the spare-time sadhaks to find consolation in their own conceit, I return to matters which are more directly concerned with my purpose, viz., the purpose of persuading you of the necessity of a *complete* treatise. Assuming that the account of evolution given at page 8 of "Lights" is correct, superseding those given at page 8 of "The Teaching" and page 96 of "The Riddle" as incomplete or half-truth, it will appear that plants and animals were simultaneously created by life-powers or life-beings descending from the life-plane and acting to the life-principle involved in the earth and being reacted to by the latter.

But besides life there were other things involved in the earth-consciousness, viz., mind, super-mind and *sachchidananda*. Did these three factors play no part in the creation of plants and animals? The truth should be clearly revealed. The nature of the interaction ought also

to be clearly indicated. Was there any psycho-analytic interplay? Were all the plants, from the common grass to the tall iron-wood, created at the same time or successively? Were the animals also created simultaneously, from the little red-ant to the huge *dinosaur*? Was there an *interregnum* between the creation of the plants and that of the animals?

It will appear that man was created last. Were savages and now-civilized races created at the same time? Were they created with different potentialities? If so, what constituted these differences? Did mind descending from the mind-plane act on animals or plants or upon the mind-principle involved in matter? In the latter case was any part played by life, supermind and *sachchidananda*? If so, which of them took the leading part? Which of them had the strongest urge and will?

I suppose when the animal was produced not only the life-principle, but the mind, super-mind and *sachchidananda* principles also transposed themselves into the animal. Was there any readjustment in these principles in the animal after transposition? Is there any evolution from one animal species to another? If not, what causes the differences in the life, mind, supermind and *sachchidananda* principles in the different species of animals? Is it not true that in the tiger life and mind principles are strongest, and supermind and *sachchidananda* principles are weakest? Is it not true also that in the lamb the situation is reversed? Christ compared the lamb to the *Yogin*, for he clearly indicated that the lamb was nearest to God in its attributes, at least moral attributes

What is the meaning of the sentence, "but only matter is at first organised" ? Is matter organised in the form of a particular plant or a particular animal ? Does the form remain incomplete until the descent of life from the life-plane ? Does the latter complete the form ? What are the circumstances which determine the form of the organized matter ? What is the order of strength in which life, mind, supermind and *sachchidananda* exist in principle in matter ? Does the order of strength change in the organized matter ? Does a further change take place, when, life descending, the living plant or animal is finally formed ?

It appears there are at least two wills, the will of the spirit and the will of the mind. Does their strength vary from time to time ? If the mind has a will, it is probable life also has a will. Which of the three wills is the strongest ? Is it true that the vital will is the strongest in the West, and the spiritual will in the East ? Where is the mental will strongest ?

We are told that the spiritual will is very weak in all men under ordinary circumstances, when *Isward* within suffers from *anishatwa*. This means that the mental will is stronger until the psychology is set right. How are the psychological forces set right ? How does the soul get rid of its *anishatwa* ? Is it simply by an accidental recollection of *Iswardatwa* ? If any outside person calls upon the spirit to recollect itself, who is that person ? Is it God ? What interest has God in making the spirit recollect its original position, which existed billions of years ago ? Since those aboriginal days, the spirit has

been losing its knowledge (*Jnana*), its sentiency, its memory, its imagination, its capacity for understanding. It has been all along losing its power of will. How can that power be restored so quickly ? The memory has been lost altogether. Why did not the spirit recollect its original power and dignity during the whole course of degeneration ? Why did it not recollect it during the so-called evolution by which earth-consciousness was converted into man-consciousness ?

Does not your conscience prick you to reflect that you have finished your account of evolution in a single sentence, and sixty three words, while the truth is that sixtythree thousand words would be inadequate to explain it intelligibly and with any degree of comprehensiveness ? Will you not undertake the task now ? Am I unreasonable in asking you to do so ?

When some young philosophers recently discussed the question of evolution in a controversial and pugnacious spirit in their inability to discover the true meaning of it, it seemed exceedingly queer to me that they never thought of referring the matter to you who were not only alive, but always ready to throw new light on obscure utterances. I believe they had not yet read "Lights on Yoga," for the latter came out in February 1935, whereas one of the critics had given his opinion in October 1934. Even if they had read "Lights" they would not have been much benefited, for the account given there consists of one sentence only. In the absence of a complete treatise on evolution alone, one might be tempted to think that your object is not to expound

but to confound. What is the good of confounding young minds?

“The Riddle” and “Lights” are fragmentary replies given to random miscellaneous questions put by immature youthful minds who wish for instructions out of the depths of their hearts. You seem to have given them stones while they wanted bread. I really feel for them. The questions are not given. Why are they not given? The omission has made the answers doubly unintelligible. Even God could not have fully expounded the neo-tantric form of evolution in sixty-three words. That is my belief. I may be right or I may be wrong, but no impartial critic can honestly say that the account of evolution given by you conveys the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth or that it conceals nothing. It conceals the truth about the beginning of evolution and its course for the first half of eternity. You have overstepped the truth by giving it a false end at the unification of humanity. The evolution ought to have begun with the beginning of *Lila*. It ought to have ended with the end of it. Is the superman the last word in the *Lila*? Has the superman no further evolutionary activity? The gap between final realisation and unity of humanity loudly calls for filling in. What is the value of supramental light if it does not lead us to the end of the *Lila*; if it does not envisage the end of creation?

XI.

“**Y**OGIC Sadhan” does not consist of such replies. But the editor’s epilogue, acts like a *Kelvinator* on the enthusiasm of the reader. “It may

as well be to guard against certain misconceptions which may arise from the brevity and his omission of some important points considered by him, no doubt, to be, however important, yet outside his scope."

The editor has tried to be as respectful as possible. But I think he might have been more respectful in language, if not in thought. When we think of the stupidity and indolence of the soul we speak of 'the self-forgetfulness' of the Supreme Being within us. If the English language has any value, it consists mainly in its power of strengthening and softening ideas, of disguising invectives in the garb of encomium. Sarcasm, euphemism, deceptivity are its chief traits.

Is the editor an outsider? Is he one of your sadhaks of the off-time type? Is he a mere friend permitted by conventional etiquette to take liberties or to assume a patronising pose? Is he an arbitrator between you and your disciples? Is he an appointed apologist? However, the epilogue is encouraging to those who, like me, wish to know the truth. It shows that you do not assume personal infallibility like ordinary *gurus*, and this heartens and fortifies me supremely. It shows that neo-tantrism has not yet been fully explained, possibly not fully developed. It emphasises the reasonableness of the request I am making,—of the appeal for a systematic treatise. This treatise may not merely be complementary, but to a certain extent emendatory. Though the general tone of your writing is that of a supramental prophet, your words are sweet. They are not calculated to excite cavilling criticism, ex-

cept occasionally when you find yourself at bay, and are compelled either to take refuge in supramental consciousness or to use the heavy artillery of faith.

XII.

THE word 'neo-tantrism' has been coined by me in no carping spirit. It does not represent pure tantrism, but is a great improvement upon it. Tantrism failed to achieve supramental light and to discover in adequate measure the dynamic Divine truth. Neo-tantrism aims at gaining that light, and what is more valuable, at bringing it down to earth-consciousness by the suppression or transubstantiation, and not merely transformation or transfiguration of mental consciousness, by its complete conversion and not by mere purification or washing or scrubbing or cleaning.

Tantrism had no idea of collectivism beyond ethnic limits. The ideal of neo-tantrism is to bring about a vast collective, but not all-comprehensive life. Animal life and plant life are excluded. Why ? Is it because we cannot avoid exploiting them? Is it because *Sachchidananda* is not involved in them and they have no soul ? They have consciousness including will-power. In the human race there are types of men whose consciousness does not differ much from that of the highest animals. You have admitted that animals have mind within them of a feeble order. Why then exclude them from the universal

brotherhood ? Your justification for undertaking the huge task of bringing down supramental light is to help the savages and uncivilized men and to bring them up to our own level against the law of evolution, against the will of God who evidently intended that each soul should lubricate its own wheel. Uncle Tom used to be flogged because he spoilt the morale of the lazy slaves by doing their work. I think if God knew the nature of man as well as the cotton planters of America he would have flogged those who tried to bring down supramental light for the benefit of the lazy souls of the world.

Why are the plant souls and animal souls and primitive man souls lagging behind in the course of evolution, in the race of the *lila* ? Is it because their souls at the start were weaker as you suggest or because they failed to come up to the mark in the *lila* race ? God threw out the sparks or souls separately, "different in power and nature." Did he do so like a fool or a drunkard ? He had a purpose. Are you going to foil that purpose ?

You have distinguished between the will of the spirit and the will of the mind. Is it not fair to allow the stronger will to prevail, no matter whether it is mental or spiritual ? You have tried your best to depress the mental will and to elevate the spiritual will. Which of the two wills is stronger in the West as contrasted with the East ? Should we not imitate the West ? Who can deny that the West is better off, more dynamic than the East ? Are we not premature in the pursuit of our final realisation ?

XIII.

FOR long ages we have been suffering from the disease called *megalomania*, spiritual snobbishness. We have purposely enfeebled our mental will in order to strengthen the spiritual. We have divided our individuality into a duality. We have ruined ourselves by renouncing life in this world in the irrational hope of securing enjoyments in the other world. We have let the one bird in the hand fly away in order to secure two birds in the bush. We have abandoned the certain for the sake of the uncertain. We have flung away the real to muse over the ideal. When a country has been invaded by idealism, it has rushed into the bottomless pit of misery and ignorance. All past 'civilizations' have been ruined by spiritual idealism. Greece and Rome were lost in Platonism and Stoicism. You are not certain that India was lost by Vedantism. But you wish to substitute neo-tantirism for Vedantism, one idealism for another, not realism for idealism. You have done your best to cry down Vedantism. Your destructive work is admirable. But your constructive work is miserable. Your sadhaks believe that you are a strong advocate of realism. They think that in denouncing Vedantism you were inspired by the aspiration of ennobling, enriching, expanding real life,—life in this world. They have not got the capacity to be undeceived yet. One can easily imagine the depth of depression that will engulf them when they come to know the truth. Supramental life on earth is not very

different from life in heaven. You pretend to unite humanity, but are really trying to destroy it. The Jews sought for the *Messiah* and God sent them Christ, a dreamer, a spiritual idealist, who pretended to bring down the Kingdom of God on earth, and left it in the hands of the Devil, fortified and reinforced by his failure and defeatism. Even you must acknowledge that Christ was a failure. Nietzsche called him an 'impostor,' the enemy of mankind. Your sadhaks thought you were in favour of Nietzscheism, his 'will-to-power,' his ideas of nobility. They will soon find, if you develop your ideas fully, that they have been miserably befooled by you. They wanted growth of the *lila*. You seemed to contribute to its growth. Now they will be disappointed to find that you want its decay, slowly leading to paralysis in supramental light, which will make a dull, dreary, monotonous affair, devoid of grumbling, devoid of life and desires.

XIV.

THE sentence, "a conversion has to be made, a turning of the consciousness by which mind has to change into the higher principle", that is, of supramental consciousness, seems to be obscure. The higher consciousness may be also super-consciousness. Do you not distinguish between supramental consciousness and super-consciousness? Do you not distinguish between spiritual consciousness and mental consciousness? Is there no

supra-spiritual consciousness corresponding to supramental consciousness ? What is the difference between spiritual consciousness and supramental consciousness ? Is not the spirit same as super-mind ? What will become of the spirit in man when the human race is turned into the supramental race ? Has the super-mind no ego in it ? Does it not distinguish between *meum* and *tuum* ? Between mine and thine ? If it does not, it is futile to speak of the Superman race. A race is composed of many individuals. But there can be only one superman in the absence of 'you and me.' When a man says "*soham*," what does he mean ? Does he not mean something which is meaningless ? When he acknowledges himself to be *paramahansa*, does he not imply that all men should worship him ? Ordinarily, we admire him and worship God. Are not admiration and worship two distinct forms of consciousness ? Do the disciples of Ramkrishna worship him ? I admire you, but I do not worship you. Probably your sadhaks do.

XV.

A 'conversion' implies two things, viz., a thing to be converted and a thing into which it is converted. What is the thing converted in 'supramentalization' ? Is it the mental consciousness ? If so, into what is it converted ? What becomes of the spiritual consciousness when supramental consciousness is achieved ? Is the mental will changed into the spiritual will in

supramentalization ? What becomes of *Buddhi* ? What becomes of *manas*, *chitta* and *prana* when supramentalization takes place ? Mere higher and lower, inner and outer, deeper and shallower, *supra* and *infra* mean nothing. They convey no idea. They are deceptive. It is quite possible that ideas exist, but language is defective. If so, you should try to correct and improve the language instead of trying to distort ideas by attempting to explain them. All preaching should be stopped until the language has been perfected.

XVI.

IS 'supramentalization' something like 'anglicisation ?' The 'anglicised' Indian changes his mode of living, his manner of speaking and walking, his general habits ; he changes his diet of rice and fish for beef and mutton, his privy for the commode, his *dhoti* for trousers, his *namaskar* for good morning ; but he does not change the colour of his skin, his old ways of thinking, his general consciousness.

Is supramentalization comparable to civilization ? The 'civilized' man educates himself and differently thinks in many ways from the savage. He knows many things which the savage does not. He knows that the sun does not move round the earth ; he knows that causing pain for mere pleasure is a bad thing ; he knows the

value of power and exploitation. He does not commit murder to see how the corpse behaves. He does not go about naked. He does not gratify his sexual appetite in the open street. He lives in society. His behaviour is purposive. He is a pragmatist. He does not pray ; he seeks for power to dispense with divine help. He knows that God does not help the weak and poor. He knows that 'Heaven helps those who help themselves.' He does not fight duels but wages war. He does not commit murder but commits massacre. He speaks the truth when he finds it useful. He does not hesitate to conceal thought when self-interest calls for concealment. He knows that life is impossible without exploitation ; he knows that open exploitation leads to failure in the end. He 'refines' himself in many ways. His exploitation is refined. His 'barbarism' is characterised by complexity and obscurity like the preaching of a prophet.

Is supramentalization comparable to conversion from one religion to another, from Hinduism to Christianity, from Vedantism to neo-tantrism ? The Gods are different. The ideals are different. The purposes of creation are different. Some religions distinguish between God and Devil, others hold they are one and the same. By this kind of conversion the consciousness is more or less changed, but not wholly changed.

Is supramental light a complete substitute for mental light ? Or, are they mixed up in different proportions ? Can brass be converted into gold like sulphuric acid into sulphurated hydrogen ?

XVII.

IN the conversion from mental to supramental, is consciousness merely the intellect changed into super-intellect ? Are not the mental will, mental memory, mental emotions, mental imagination also changed ? Are not the *buddhi*, *manas*, *chitta* and *prana* also changed ? Of these the *buddhi* belongs to the spirit, *manas* and *chitta* to the mind, and *prana* to life. If the *buddhi* remains unchanged, how does the super-intellect work ? If the *buddhi* is changed, what is the nature of the change in the spiritual consciousness, the spiritual thinking faculty ? It is said that all the faculties are independent of one another. They are subordinate officials. What faculties in the Hindu psychology perform the functions of memory, imagination and emotion ? When the conversion takes place, does imagination become improved in quality, or, is the old imagination replaced by a new and stronger imagination ? Is supramental poetry richer than mental poetry ? How do the 'creative arts' change in the supramental plane ? Do supramental beings feel a deeper thrill, a stronger palpitation or throbbing ? Are they more strongly affected by poetry, painting, architecture, ceramics and sculptures ?

Does psychology include spiritual faculties or only the mental faculties ? The word 'psychology' is English. In the English language no difference is made between the mind and the spirit. The spirit is an attitude of

the mind. Is it not risky to use the word 'psychology' in Hindu philosophy ? Properly speaking psychology should deal with the spirit, spiritual consciousness, psychic consciousness. Would it not be wrong to mix up mental and spiritual faculties as a single substance ? There are two wills, mental will and psychical will. Is it not dangerous to regard them as one will ? The psychical will plays no part in the humdrum evolution effected by Nature. But it is the principal figure, *Kali* and *Sakti* in the acceleration of evolution by Yoga.

There is such a jungle of ideas, faculties, consciousnesses, that it is impossible to have a clear notion of the doctrine or teaching. May I again request you to write a systematic treatise ?

XVIII.

THE Yoga has been confused by the theory of evolution as given in "The Teaching" and "Lights." These latter make the Yoga start before the soul has taken possession of man and mind. or has even come into existence as a being and not merely involved as a principle in man. But the true Yoga pre-supposes the existence of the spirit as *Iswara*, the central being, the autocrat dwelling in man.

When the spirit has shaken off its *Anishatwa* and has recovered its *Iswartwa*, is there any necessity for it to seek for supramental light ? Is the consciousness of *Iswara* inferior to the supramental consciousness ?

But probably you will say that there are many types of *Iswarahood*, for the original psychic seeds or sparks came out, "different in power and in nature and conditions in general." To call the spirit *Iswara* is unmeaning. There is not only a multiplicity of *Iswaras*, but different varieties of *Iswara*. Some of these varieties are probably no better than mere men.

Do the old *tantras* regard the spirit as different from one another from the moment of their manifestation? Did God throw them out as different kinds of beings? What caused you to entertain the idea of original difference between spirit and spirit? Sportsmen use handicaps to create a balance and equality for the sake of justice. What caused you to think so unfairly of God? Did you want to make the *lila* as interesting as practicable by any and every means at your disposal? It is quite possible God was unjust when He threw out the sparks, but has since been improving His character, which is expected to be perfect at the end of the *lila*.

From whatever point of view I look at your teaching, I am confronted by paradoxes and incoherences. Will you not do anything to clear up my doubts? You have virtually introduced the 'caste system' in the other world as our ancient forefathers did in this. It is possible the different *genera* and *species* have their origin in the difference of power and nature and conditions in which the spirits issued out of God. It is quite possible the plants are the old age representatives of the worst species of souls, the animals represent the next higher species, and man represents the highest species. You have thus

created a new 'Origin of Species,' different from Darwin's, but not worse. Evolution in this interpretation of creation is a redundancy. God did not trust the task of differentiating to created beings, but outlined a complete scheme with his own hand.

With such an original difference between one soul and another, the ideal of the unity of man seems to verge on impiety. God not merely appeared as a multiplicity but as an infinite variety. The multiplicity and variety must be perennial. They must exist till the final end of the *Lila*, which we call *final realization*. You have also used that charming term "final realization," which has a dreadful fascination for all living beings. The final realization means the return of all souls to God, and their absorption in Him, the final termination of multiplicity and variety.

In this view the oneness of humanity would be a *khanda pralaya*, which is possibly quite opposed to the wishes of God. Unity can be justified as a means of slowly reducing multiplicity and variety. This might be justifiable in the case of the evolution of multiplicity and variety. But since God Himself created the latter, there is no growth or decay of multiplicity and variety, no evolution either forward or backward. Your words are:—"Why should not the Infinite throw Itself out in infinite variety, why must it be in an innumerable sameness?" "But why should we assume that the psychic seeds or sparks all started in a race at the same

time, equal in conditions, equal in power and nature?" "How many of these psychic seeds started long before others and have a great part of development behind them and how many are young and raw and half-grown only? And even among those who started together, why should there not be some who ran at a greater speed and others who loitered and grew with difficulty or went about in circles?"

What is the meaning of growth and development of the psychic seeds or souls? Does degeneration include development? Many kinds of souls are distinguished by you, raw souls, young souls, half-grown souls, adult souls, adolescent souls, old souls, weak souls, strong souls, great souls, mean souls, vicious souls, virtuous souls, learned souls, illiterate souls and so on and so forth.

Were not these souls involved in principle in earth-consciousness? When were they involved? What is the meaning of the clause '*sachchidananda is involved in the earth*'? Is this *sachchidananda* God Himself? Or the manifested spirits, different in power and nature?

What is most astounding in all these sentiments is this:—"Granted that the One Divine is the source of all and the self is the same in all."

How can the self be the same in all? Are not the selves spirits of different power and nature, differently developed, degenerated, evolved, involved, running fast and slowly, loitering and quickening their pace? Com-

peting with one another, trying to win victory over one another, overpowering one another, and enriching the *Lila* in all manner of ways ?

The whole thing looks like an *augcan* stable. I request you like Hercules, to undertake the task of clearing what you have yourself created. I ask you again to write a systematic treatise. I pray, do not leave neotantism and supramentalism in their present confused condition. Do not leave them to find the same fate as all other religious doctrines of the world,—Vedantism, Sankhyaism, Buddhism, Vaishnavism, Christianity, Islam, Taoism and the rest of the lot. What a huge Himalaya of errors lay across the world, spatially and historically ! You have been good enough to burn them to ashes and to clear the atmosphere. Please do not leave neotantism and supramentalism to meet with the fate of the religions of the past.

XIX.

TO illustrate the confusion introduced by the use of the English language to explain Indian philosophy, I shall again refer to the theory of evolution given at page 8 of "**Lights.**" It is said, "then mind descends from the mind-plane to create man." What is this mind ? Is it the English mind, which is synonymous with spirit ? The only difference that the English

language makes between mind and spirit is that in explaining the relations of man to God it uses the word spirit, while in explaining his relation to things of this world it uses the word mind. Generally, spirit corresponds with distilled liquor, which inspires, stimulates, intoxicates, vivifies, enthuses, buoys up the mind, the mental will, imagination, memory and emotions. The spirit stimulates the poet, the adventurer, the warrior, the erotist and the pious man. Radhakrishnan calls it the 'supreme light' in man. He does not call it merely supramental light. He says, "when the spirit inspires the intellect we have genius ; when it stirs the will we have heroism ; when it flows through the heart we have love and when it transforms our being the son of man becomes the son of God." "We cannot understand Plato, if we have not the *spirit* of Plato. To understand Christ we must have the *mind* of Christ." Thus spirit and mind mean the same thing in the English language.

What do you mean by the word 'mind' as used above ? It seems you had in your mind the idea that "the spirit descended from the spirit-plane to create man." Otherwise, man becomes a non-spiritual being, a mere mental being, a bundle of intellect, imagination and passions. Yoga would be impossible ; for Yoga is performed by the spirit and not by the mind. It requires the spiritual will, *sakti*, *kali*, power. The mental will means desire, wish, appetite.

Mind in the ordinary sense has no existence in Indian philosophy. Will you not clear up the confusion

between mind and spirit, between supermind and spirit, between the spirit-plane and the mind-plane, between self and spirit, between the real self and the false self ? Do you wish to make neo-tantrism a poisonous mixture of the East and West ? An Englishman said, "the wind that blows from the east is good neither for man nor for beast." Shall we say, 'the wind that blows from the west is for man and God the best ?'

XX.

WHEN the earth consciousness has been supramentalized, will animals give up their animalism or animal consciousness ? Will plants give up their vegetativeness or plant-consciousness ? Will carnivores cease to find nourishment in herbivores ? Of course, there will exist no human race. Will supermen live without eating ? Will they not reproduce their species ? Will they have no death or birth ? If superman and free-spirit are synonymous, no difficulty need arise. The psychical plane will be indistinguishable from earth-plane. The world of spirits and the world of men will become one and the same. But it is said the earth will still be different from Heaven. An attempt has been made to convince us by a question. "What for instance will be

the utility of a supramental creation on earth, if it were just the same thing as a supramental creation on the supramental plane?" (page 15 *Riddle*). Can a question really convince a man? We want to know the actual difference; what have we got to do with utilitarianism? Does God follow the utilitarian morality? What is the utilitarian necessity of making any supramental creation on earth at all? Will it improve or enrich the *lila* or make it less interesting or poorer? Which will gratify our utilitarian appetite most, dull *lila* or interesting *lila*?

We are told that greater labour will be involved in the creation of superman or the supramentalization of the earth-consciousness. It is added that the result will justify the labour. We want to know the result first before we determine whether the result was justified. This supramentalization will be a part of the *lila*. But we have not yet made up our mind whether it is better to stop the *lila* or make it more attractive. The best test of better or worse lies in whether it is better to allow the *lila* to grow or to decay. There is no other 'cosmic' test. All other tests are pragmatic, particular. What is good for one is evil for another; what is good at one time is evil at another.

I do not wish to make a general remark at this stage. But I am persuaded that in whatever direction one looks for guidance one finds the already published texts inadequate and unsatisfactory.

XXI.

A GAIN, by the supramentalization of the earth social organization will be a redundancy by the extinction of 'strife.' The *lila* will become largely flat. Are we sure that this flatness will not be repugnant to Divine purpose? Has the time really come for the decline of the *lila*? It will one day end, no doubt, by the law of 'final realization.' It is also almost certain that it will begin to decline long before the end. The sun does not set at once. It slowly rises to the zenith and then declines as slowly as it rose. Has the *lila* reached the zenith? What evidence is there? You are yourself wavering and uncertain. You have pointed out (page 83 *Riddle*) that the outer nature of man is constantly enriching the *lila*, while the inner nature is diminishing its value. They have been doing so from the very outset. Has the outer nature finished its duty? Has the inner nature ceased to be undutiful?

These questions may be useful to you in writing the treatise for which I appeal. Experience shows that dependence on 'apostles' to complete the doctrine is the chief cause of the disintegration of religion. To leave opportunities for criticism to commentators, annotators and miscellaneous critics is to leave a corpse on the 'tower of silence.' Who have done more harm to our religion than Sankara and other annotators? Who have

done more harm to Christianity than St. Paul or St. Augustine ? Look at the findings of the 'œcumenical' councils. What labour they spent on them ! And the more they did so, the more became the difficulties and confusions of Christianity. If Christ had left a complete record, the world might have been saved from much that has troubled it for centuries. I again appeal to you not to leave your valuable metaphysical speculations in the hands of your sadhaks, particularly the non-resident spare-time ones. They have already done you much harm. Do not, I pray, leave them a vast field for doing more harm. They will tear it to pieces and you will stare at them from the supramental plane where you will be lying either for rest or for planning grand works of cosmic value for the good, not of mankind which will soon disappear, but of the 'created' world. For God's sake do nothing which makes for the decline of the *lila*, without a positive assurance from the Divine consciousness that He has ceased to relish it.

XXII

YOU will probably acknowledge that the doctrine of neo-tantric Yoga cannot be accurately explained in the English language, the language of a people that have been fed upon ideas with which our own have no affinity, a people who make no distinction between soul and mind, and are unable to distinguish even between intuition and

intellect, to say nothing of the distinction between mind and supermind, or between soul and supermind, between transcendental, cosmic and individual God, between divine consciousness and earth consciousness; who doubt that consciousness has any existence as an entity, to whom *buddhi*, *manas*, *chitta* and *prana* are strange metaphysical apparitions, who cannot conceive that life and mind can be isolated alive from the body, who think that the soul takes rest in the grave after death until the body is entirely dissolved by earth-worms, who put the body in a coffin to enable the soul to lengthen its rest before the fateful Day of Judgment, who think that life in this world completely determines life in the other and many of whom are now learning to completely ignore the latter life, for whom man is mortal, who think that a sinner is hurled into 'eternal perdition' and the man of virtue is secure in eternal enjoyment, who are bewildered by the idea of final realization, who can never conceive the possibility of the identity or equality of man and God, actual or potential, free or imprisoned; who are so overpowered by racial conceit that they are unable to conceive that one race can have the same consciousness or form of soul as another, who cannot think of rebirth as a possibility with its manifold implications and consequences, or that the soul can have any interest in struggling to separate itself from life and mind, who have no idea of the meaning of *sraddha*, or of *karma* or of *nirvana* or of *yoga*, of spiritual evolution, or of supermanhood (except in the Nietzschean sense); who cannot believe that God alone manages the affairs of the world, who can have no spiritual idea of *lila*,

its growth and decay ; who can never believe that the world will one day *fulfil itself by self-destruction*, that suicide (death in *Samadhi*) is the most glorious form of death.

Sthula, suksma and karana are dreadful puzzles in the West. Knowledge starting from our inmost consciousness and extending outward into the senses is a mystery. Free-will and causal order keeping close contact with each other and acting in unison is a bewilderment. The transformation of spirit into matter and the re-transformation of matter into spirit are inconceivable conceptions. Spirit can create matter out of nothing, can create light out of darkness, and joy out of sorrow, and purity out of filth, and virtue out of sin. It cannot create any of them out of itself. God can create man in His own image, but He cannot create him with His own substance. He can create him out of dust only. He can enter into the body through the nostrils. He cannot enter into it through any other gate. That the spirit can accompany the sperm-cell into the germ cell is a mystery. 'Rebirth' is a monstrous fiction. The spirit belongs to the man ; the man does not belong to the spirit. *Lila* is a stupid idea. It represents God as the greatest miscreant. God without the Devil would be *functus officio*. If the Devil did not exist, God would have invented him to escape from *ennui*. He could not bear to be a deistic God. He wanted somebody to unmake what He made, so that He might have the pleasure of remaking it. He cannot Himself unmake what He makes. He cannot

have both good and evil in Him. He cannot have two faces or aspects. He cannot make nectar evolve poison out of it. The western mind cannot conceive that 'good and evil' are one in essence, having issued out of a neutral substance, and branched out by the influence of environment or circumstances. *Lila* is a stupid idea for it. It includes making, unmaking and remaking at the same time. It is too childish to be ascribed to God.

These are some of the ways in which the western people think. Language is formed by ideas. It is directed, controlled and guided by ideas. It cannot move a step without the permission, consent or acquiescence of ideas. Language is the reflection of ideas. Try to express the ideas of one culture by the language of another, and the result will be a coagulated clot of confusion, a bewildering chaos, a perfect anarchy of thought, a lunatic asylum of consciousness.

XXIII.

THE theory of evolution has very recently changed the atmosphere of thought in the West. It has changed her language. Nature has taken charge of the triple functions hitherto performed by God, Causality and Matter. Everything has become possible

and impossible at the same time. The law of transformation is working wonders with the help of time. Nature and Time together can convert the insect into a man and reconvert him at pleasure. Degeneration and regeneration, involution and evolution, entanglement and emancipation, conversion and purification,—these are words in common use. Every body understands them, and no body comprehends them. Intuition and intellect, mind and spirit, good and evil, self and ego, integration and devastation, quiescence and thrill, dynamicity and indolence, love and strife, heroism and cowardice, mind and matter, physiology and psychology, metaphysics and philosophy, philosophy and science, science and commonsense, knowledge and ignorance, beauty and utility, truth, half-truth and untruth, which were once opposites, constantly in collision, have now become friendly and interchangeable terms. Everything is subject to transformation. God can be transformed into the Devil, and the Devil into God; man can be transformed into Superman and back into the beast. The spirit can be transformed into mind, mind can be transformed into life, life can be transformed into matter, and the whole range of transformation can be turned back into the Divine spirit.

Complete chaos prevails both in thought and language in the East as well as in the West. Civilization and *lila* are one and the same thing. The *lila* has now reached its climax in the West. It is spreading again over the East. No body can complain against

lila. Nobody has any complaint against civilization. It is futile to complain against it. It is fatuous.

The *lila* has never showed itself more impressively than by the transformation of old tantrism into neo-tantrism, of Sanskrit scriptures into English dogmas. What was thought impossible has now become possible. Evolution has invaded religion, and transformed it into science by its will-power. Evolution has brought forth mind out of matter and is now pregnant with supermind.

XXIV.

BY a strange irony of fate or by an unexpected turn of the *lila* or by the routine forces of evolution, our education is linguistically conducted on the English basis. We understand English words better than we understand Sanskrit words. The vernacular languages of India are as yet in a woefully unsatisfactory condition. At school and college we call them our 'second language.' With the English language we adopted the English mode of thinking, the English form of consciousness.

We speak of the importance of having respect for the mother-tongue. It is foolish to speak of it in relation to science, philosophy and religion. Our mothers never studied any of these things ; and they are never

registered in the mother-tongue in any country. The religion of England began to decline as the Bible was translated into English. Respect for the Vedanta has substantially declined since the Upanishads began to be translated into Bengali. Indeed no body can reasonably complain that his mother-tongue is neglected by religion or philosophy. Mother-tongue was invented for fondling children and lulling them to sleep. It was not invented to arouse admiration and reverence for God. Religion has need of being registered in a foreign language. Compare "**The Religion of man**" (*Hibbert Lectures*) with "**Manuser Dharma**," (*Kamala Lectures*) both written by Dr. Tagore, and the necessity of foreign language will be at once recognized. The dignity of religion is lost in the mother-tongue.

But who ever thought that the religion of the Hindu would find expression in the English language ? Can 'the law of evolution' account for this strange phenomenon ? What is stranger still is that it attracts disciples more readily than any religion registered in Bengali or Sanskrit. There are many *asrams* in the country, but none is so dignified as the Asram at Pondicherry.

No body can reasonably complain that neo-tantrism is preached in English. Our apprehension is that the English language may not rule our mind after the English people have quitted our country. The universities are trying to reinforce the 'vernaculars' at the expense of English. They are trying to separate our education

from the latter in the same way as the soul, in case of accidental death, struggles to separate itself from mind and life. (page 37 "*Lights*").

XXV.

BEING bound by fate to use the English language to express our religious ideas, we should not forget why we prefer it. We prefer it because our ideas, inspite of all our pretended protestations, have become largely transformed into those of the English people. We prefer it because with it we can give more intelligible expression to our ideas in that language. It would be a monstrous sin to prefer elegance of style to expressiveness, to try to make ourselves admired rather than clearly understood. Elegance of style belongs to aestheticism. It is an art. To sacrifice clearness of thought at the altar of beauty is an inexcusable frivolity. Sir Samuel Hoare has admired "**The Religion of Man**" not for its ideas, but for its beautiful English. Professor Joad has admired "**An Idealist View of Life**" (Radhakrishnan's **Hibbert lectures**) in the same way and on the same ground. Religion has become a matter of show, a puppet at the service of 'creative art.' This is what is really objectionable in the use of the English language as the vehicle of expression in the propagation of religion, new or old, original or newly discovered. "**The Riddle**" is often obscured by its beauty, and it is suspected that the embroidery has weakened the fabric. It is a most

difficult thing to expose its weakness, because it is so artfully hidden in the flickering radiance of beauty.

We cannot imitate English sentiment in every respect. The English are a ruling race ; we are a subject people. Their consciousness is substantially different from ours. They are ruling the world ; they are wishing to rule God out of order, out of existence. We on our part, unable to free ourselves from foreign domination, naturally wish to be ruled by a higher autocrat. But here again English sentiment distorts our wish. Instead of surrendering ourselves completely in the hand of the Divine, we are learning to regard ourselves as collaborators and co-operators on co-ordinate terms. We refuse to confess that we are slaves. So long as God was quiescent this did not matter. But since God has become dynamic, we must not think of co-operating with Him, but must be prepared to be His instruments or slaves. It is bad logic to claim co-partnership with God and at the same time to profess ourselves to be mere instruments. In the name of order we are creating confusion. In the name of religion we are creating evolution, atheism and agnosticism and utter chaos of

First Principles.

XXVI.

It will be useful to explain more fully the real objection to the use of the English language in expounding the doctrine of neo-tantrism. I think it

will be better to call it the doctrine of supramentalism. Supramentalism is its distinctive characteristic. The supramental consciousness stands above mental consciousness. It is distinct from the latter ; it is even contrasted with it. But the one can be converted into the other. What is the meaning of this conversion ? Can brass be converted into gold ? From the chemical point of view at least you will admit that it cannot. It can be exchanged for gold by the process of 'give and take.' It can be replaced by gold by throwing it away and bringing gold from somewhere to occupy its place. Can an ass be beaten into a horse ?

Is it possible to have the gold in addition to the brass ? The thing looks like 'bigamy'. Both the wives cannot be equally loved, but the services of both can be utilized. A man can have mind and supermind at the same time. He can enjoy the beauty of the 'Valley of the False Glimmer'; he can also enjoy "glimpses" of the resplendence of the higher world. 'Glimmer' and 'glimpses' are very attractive words. They are peculiarly English. The English language is very expressive or excretive ; it is also very secretive. What is most baneful in this language is that it controls thought and refuses to be controlled by it.

Glimmer and gimpes are both unsatisfactory. The one can be easily exchanged for the other. But the brilliance of truth and the darkness of false-hood

are not naturally exchangeable. Would it not have been better to wait till you had obtained supramental light in its full blaze? Glimpses of truth and the glimmer of falsehood have the bad habit of coalescing with each other. They give us penumblic light which is deceptive light or twilight or half-light. Half-light produces half-truth, which is worse than untruth, while it pretends to give the semblance of truth which in reality is equivalent to dissemblance of truth.

XXVII

SUPERMIND looks like a superior mind, different in power, but not in nature. The same kind of blood runs through the veins of both ; in the supermind it runs quickly and sparkingly ; in the mind it runs slowly with a darkish tinge. There is great affinity between them. But man can never have the supermind. He must become a superman to have it. To become a superman he must cease to be a man. He must give up animal, economic, aesthetic and intellectual life. What part of man remains in the superman, when he has accomplished the yogic resurgence into the glories of the spiritual existence ? (page 68, *Ideal and Progress*)

But the supermind descends from above, while the mind ascends from below. They come from the opposite poles. The one descends from Heaven ; the

other ascends from Hell. The one has emanated from Divine conscience, the other from the inconscience of filthy matter. It may be said the earth is instinct with *Sachchidananda*, supermind, mind and life. But that is mere magic, jugglery of words, sleight of hands, mesmerism, hypnotization. The English language is distinguished for its hypnotizing power. That is the real objection to the use of that language.

What is the supermind? Is it the mind of the spirit, the free-spirit that popped out of the Divine substance, uncontaminated by contact with the physical world? If so, the term supermind is misleading. Structurally, it has more affinity with mind than with spirit. Why not call it the spirit, the spiritual light, the spiritual consciousness, the spiritual understanding, the spiritual radiance, brilliance, dazzle, blaze, resplendence, the *psychic sun*.

If supermind is not the same thing as spiritual consciousness, what is the justification of its creation? What new function is it intended to serve? If the function itself is old, what performed it before? If the function is new, what caused the necessity of creating it? Is it the latest creation in the universe? Did you discover the function first or the performing agent? With what instrument did you discover it?

It is said to be "a triumphant new self-discovery of the Divine in conditions that are not elsewhere." Where is this *elsewhere*? On earth or in the stars?

How is it that the Divine was so slow in making the discovery? What is the precise date of its discovery? It is said that supermind existed in the Vedic age, but unfortunately the Vedantists, even the Vaishnavas and Tantrists failed to discover it. If so, what is the meaning of its newness? What exactly has occurred in the universe to make the new creation necessary? Is it a consequence of evolution? What was the stage of evolution at which it was manifested by the Divine? Have we advanced farther in evolution since that date? If so, what is the direction of that evolution? Has the new discovery been made too late or too early?

It is said supramental creation on earth is different from supramental creation on the supramental plane. What is the latter supramental creation? Is not the supramental plane the same thing as the spirit-world? Is not the spiritual world the same thing as Heaven? It is said "our business is to bring down Heaven on earth for ourselves and mankind," (page 83, *Yogic Sadhan*). What is the change you intend to make in the nature of Heaven before bringing it down on earth? (See page 15, *The Riddle*). What mischief has recently happened to the earth to make supernatural creation necessary on it? Have sorrow and weakness been increasing of late? Is it the intention of the Divine to remove the accrescence or to remove them in their wholeness? Do you know these things by faith or by supramental light or by the intellect? If it is by the supramental light, where and how did you get it? Did you get it by overmental vision? If so, where is the certainty

of your acquisition? How can you be sure that you have not been deceived by the *Daityas*, little gods, and positively hostile beings with which the over-mental zone is infested?

What is the difference between self-discovery and creation? Is not invention a better word? The whole thing is transparently obscure. Such paradoxes as abound in these passages were possible only in the English language which is a highly finished diplomatic language. It is better not to know these things than to know them wrong or as a jungle infested by snakes.

XXVIII

APART from the difference between one language and another, the capacity of language, as a thing by itself, adequately and accurately to express thought, is a problem which is likely to remain unsettled for a long time to come. Generally, thought moves faster than language, and where knowledge is subjective or limited to a narrow circle, language positively refuses to submit to public manipulation. Every philosopher ought to have three languages, one for his own satisfaction, another for that of philosophers like himself and a third for the public. What is adequate for the philosopher himself may be inadequate for other philosophers and

wholly unintelligible to the public. The inadequacy of language to express thought varies directly as the altitude or height of consciousness. The higher the consciousness, the lower the power of language to express its thoughts. For supramental consciousness language is either utterly dumb or a chaos of words. Primitive man created language for expressing his thoughts, which were simple. But civilized man thinks faster than he speaks. Half his thoughts never finds expression, because it never seeks for it. Language retaliates even by concealing such thoughts as earnestly seek for expression. We ordinarily say man created language more for concealing or disguising his thoughts than for expressing them. We invented language for expressing untruths and half-truths, and no wonder language, even when it earnestly tries, fails to express truth.

XXIX.

NEO-TANTRISM is based upon difference of consciousness which is an abstract name metamorphosed by metaphysical subtlety into a concrete reality. The question of consciousness pervades the whole atmosphere of neo-tantrism. It penetrates into every nook and corner of it. From the universal spirit down to every atom of filthy matter it is all consciousness; higher consciousness, lower consciousness, shallow consciousness, deep consciousness and so forth. God Himself

is consciousness. Spirit, mind, life and matter all are consciousness or have it. They differ from one another by varying degrees of consciousness, types or species of consciousness. Supramental consciousness, spiritual consciousness, psychic consciousness—these are for Heaven or supra-physical world. For the physical world we have mental consciousness, vital consciousness, material consciousness. When the two worlds meet together a chaos of consciousness ensues. The philosopher has a different consciousness from the scientist, the scientist has a different consciousness from the man of common sense, the latter from the idiot. Thus every man has a consciousness more or less different from that of his neighbours. To prevent the clash of consciousness neo-tantrism aims at extinguishing all consciousness of the physical world, viz., mental consciousness manifested in aesthetic and intellectual life, vital consciousness manifested in animal and economic life, and material consciousness manifested in the evolution of animal life and also plant life. Thus by bringing down supramental consciousness on earth the universe will get rid of the lower or physical forms of consciousness. Only spiritual or psychical or supramental consciousness will remain. Heaven and earth will be equalized. The gulf between them will disappear, not merely be bridged. There are other systems of thought which try to extinguish heaven. The distinctive trait of neo-tantrism is that it is trying to extinguish the earth and its consciousness. If successful, this will be a grand achievement. The world will fulfil itself by self-destruction one day. Neo-tantrism aims at this fulfilment more quickly than any other system of thought.

No doubt the supermind already exists in material, vital and mental consciousness (page 8, *Lights*), but it exists in a very dilute form. It will be concentrated into *mother tincture* by the new supramental creation. That will make a great difference. Evolution will be superseded, because it will become unnecessary. The *lila* will cease to exist on earth. It will soon cease to exist in heaven. God will retreat into his absolute self. He will withdraw the tortoise neck of the universe into his own spaceless body, and become *absolute* again. The *lila* will disappear. There will be no shooting up to God one by one, individual after individual. There will be a huge artillery fire, the whole universe bursting and vanishing at once. This is a grand scheme. But "**The Riddle**" does not venture to explain with clearness this ultimate truth, the truth of the disappearance of *lila*, in its wholeness and completeness and perfectness.

But I do not pretend to be infallible. I know nothing about the occult vital planes and the occult mental planes. There are also "occult beings" residing in the over-mental zone. They are called "little gods and strong *devityas*." Further, there are "hostile beings whose sole purpose is to create confusion, falsehood, corruption of the *sadhana* and disastrous unspiritual errors, who often take a divine name." "Nothing is easier than for the powers of these zones or hostile powers to imitate the guiding voice or image, and deceive and mislead the sadhak, (Page 57 '*The Riddle*')."

I am unable to make any statement as to what will become of these occult planes and beings when

the earth consciousness has been supramentalized. When you say they are occult, you evidently mean they are unknown to you. The all-comprehensive conclusion to which I have arrived above regarding the end of the *lila* must be read subject to these exceptions. The existence of occult beings and planes raises the suspicion that supramental consciousness is not strong enough in you for unfolding the complete truth about the world and the *lila* and the evolution and the Yoga and the concealment of God within us and his disguises and masqueradings without us. After all it is certain that neo-tantrism does not and cannot explain all the secrets of the universe.

But what do your sadhaks (specially of the leisure-time type) think of you ? They are certain that you are *god incarnate*, that there is nothing in the universe that you do not know, that so long as you help them with replies to questions they have nothing to fear, there is no problem that need remain unsolved. You are probably not aware what is happening in this circle of sadhaks. They are deifying you. They are ready to give anything to have *darsan* of you. I say this from experience. They do not even care for their children, when they make up their minds to go to Pondicherry to have *darsan* of you. I suppose you do not encourage these ideas. It is possible you are not aware of their existence. Would you not discourage them ? The best thing to do seems to be to write a complete treatise with an introduction showing what people in general and your sadhaks in particular, may expect from you, and

what they ought not to expect from you. They will not ask you lest you got offended and damned them. I have no such fear and that explains my freedom in speaking to you. Several near and dear relatives of mine are among your sadhaks. Untruth is hateful anywhere, but is most hateful when it attacks our friends and dear ones. You will now understand what makes me so earnest.

XXX.

SPIRIT, mind, life and matter all have consciousness. Indeed they are the forms of consciousness. Consciousness is the thing-in-itself in all of them. They differ from one another by varying degrees and types of consciousness. Consciousness is divided into two *genera* of orders, viz, supra-physical and physical. Physical is divided into coarse physical and subtle physical. Consciousness differs in degree and quantity, like heat which is distinguished by temperature and *caloric* power. Evolution is a variation of consciousness in an upward direction. Degeneration is evolution reversed in direction. Consciousness degenerates in the first half of eternity. Eternity is divided into *kalpas*. Each *kalpa* is divided into four parts, *satya*, *treta*, *dwapara* and *kali*. These parts are called *yugas*. Consciousness slowly degenerates in each *yuga*, and, then makes a long dip from one *yuga* to another.

The *kali yuga* is the lowest in consciousness. It is a consciousness characterised by falsehood, half-truths, deceit, sorrow and weakness of all kinds. It is the *yuga* of extreme poverty, starvation, foreign domination, that is domination of the six *ripus*, absence of freedom in will, thought, speech and action. It is the lowest *yuga* and therefore the worst. It has been our destiny to be born in this black *yuga*. We are now near the fag-end of this *yuga*. It is comfortable to think that the end of this *yuga* is the starting point of *satya yuga*. It is reasonable to hold that the last years of the *kali yuga* are somehow impregnated with the consciousness of the *satya yuga*. Otherwise, the rotation of the *yugas* and the *kalpas* would violate the law of commonsense.

Every *yuga* is a period of continuous degeneration. From one *yuga* to its next there is a sudden fall no doubt, but the precipice is not very steep or deep. The phenomenon takes place as if nothing unusual had happened.

XXXI.

WHERE then comes in evolution ? **Answer—**
Evolution begins somewhere and sometime before the end of the *kali yuga*. By means of evolution one *kalpa* or cycle prepares itself for the next. We are lucky that we were born in this eventful, hopeful period.

a period of progress, of evolution, of civilization, of supramentalization. We are the harbingers of the *satya yuga*. We ought to be grateful to the Divine consciousness for selecting the psychic seeds, out of which we have grown, in this period of evolutionary activity. Those who were selected in the other *yugas* were unfortunate. They had nothing but degeneration and despondence before them. For them the past was better than the future. For us the position is reversed.

Q. Were not all seeds scattered at the same time, i, e, at the time when creation was made, when the universe was created? **Answer**—No. Here lies the cardinal point in which neo-tantrism differs from other Hindu systems of thought. The seeds were not scattered at the same time. No cultivator scatters jute-seeds in September or paddy-seeds in *Sraran*. Seeds of various kinds have various seasons for sowing. Don't think "God is a fool or a drunkard." He knows the best season for sowing any particular seed. The Vedantists were fools. They lived in primitive times and knew only the '*jum*' system of cultivation.

Q. What is the *jum* system? **Answer**—Primitive people used to gather up all kinds of seeds and sowed them in a pit. Each kind of seed grew in its own season. But the crops were least fruitful. Neo-tantrism discovered this mistake. It found that seeds and sparks of different kinds are sown in different seasons by the Divine cultivator, to whom nothing is unknown in the past, present

or future. God is sowing seeds even now. But this is a vast subject, intimately connected with the nature of the *lila*. I shall speak of it more fully later on. (pages 80-81, "*The Riddle*").

Q. Is God selective and discriminative ? **Answer—**
Certainly He is. Otherwise, there could be no *lila*. Everything would be dull and flat, if there were nothing to grumble at. The *lila* is a problem of grumbling. Grumble originates in the spiritual urge. 'This grumbling perception is in a way the starting point of the spiritual urge.' Where the grumble is the deepest, the spiritual urge is the strongest. It is strongest in the poor and the disinherited and discontented. Therefore Christ said, "*Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" "*Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst ; for they shall be filled.*" "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." The fundamental factor in the *lila*, that is, in creation, is difference, superiority and inferiority, high and low, superficial and deep, inward and outward. Without these differences there could be no *lila* worth mentioning. Time would be lank and long, if all went right and nothing went wrong. This is the significance and beauty of *lila*. The *lila* creates joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, wealth and poverty, knowledge and ignorance, courage and cowardice, free-will and determinism, love and strife, struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, dynamicity and quiescence, war and peace, civilization and barbarism, truth and falsehood, beauty and ugliness, good and

evil, righteousness and devilry, earnestness and frivolity, nectar and poison, victory and defeat, Heaven and Earth, supramental consciousness and mental consciousness, even earth consciousness, evolution and degeneration, growth and decay, laughter and cry, fall and rise, sin and redemption, paradise and hell, work and repose, and so on and so forth.

XXXII.

IT seems then that evolution plays a very insignificant part in the *lila*. Why do people make a fuss of it? Mahendra Nath Sarkar, Adhar Chandra Das and Anil Baran Ray wasted much learning upon a discussion of neo-tantric evolution, as if evolution constituted the *alpha* and *omega* of neo-tantrism. What was the psychology behind this phenomenon? **Answer**—Misunderstanding. None of these philosophers ever tried to grasp the fundamental principles of the new doctrine of salvation by personal consummation—salvation of humanity as opposed to individuality, fulfilment of creation or *lila* by the self-destruction of the world, wish-fulfilment produced by desirelessness, achievement of the highest bliss by the surrender of all that is near and dear to us, wife, children and everything except aspiration, hope, prevision, and knowledge of things-in-themselves, that is knowledge of reality, of the beauty of the comity of humanity produced by its extinction and replacement by super-humanity or ultra-humanity.

Indeed evolution manifests itself only in a millionth part of eternity, and a billionth part of the infinity of space and stars, where there is no sorrow or weakness, no spiritual urge, no necessity of evolution. "Sorrow or weakness are not universal or eternal things, but local and temporary, local mainly of this earth, temporary, in the brief periods of the *kali Yuga* (page 83, *Yogic Sadhan*). We are compelled to seek for evolution, because we have been born and reborn in this earth and towards the close of the *Kali yuga*. Evolution is an insignificant thing. Its only value lies in the obliteration of the few remaining years of the *Kali Yuga*. These years are bound to pass away in the very nature of things, but evolution quickened by yoga can whip them out of existence with victorious rapidity. That is the value of evolution. Without yoga it is a dull, dreary phenomenon.

In the West, when people became disgusted by the humdrum laziness of evolution, they pitchforked the theory of "emergence." In India under similar circumstances neo-tantrism has introduced 'the theory of Yoga.' Emergence and Yoga have virtually put an end to evolution. They have deprived it of all its glory and dignity. We gain salvation by yoga, not by evolution. If we depended upon it, we would have to wait till the end of eternity. We can bring down supramental light to-morrow if we choose, by making meditation sufficiently intensive. The sadhaks think so. Most of them would have ere long given up neo-tantric

yoga, if they did not believe the possibility of having supramental light within the next five years. Some of them are already wavering. They have made yoga for four or five years, some even for ten years, without gaining supramental light. Some of them see at times flashes and glimpses and are persuaded to persist.

XXXIII.

WHAT after all is evolution? Is it the evolution of life out of inert matter? By no means. Neither Lamarck nor Darwin ever entertained the ambition of explaining how life sprang out of matter. The possibility of such a strange phenomenon was never present in their 19th. century mind. They simply tried to explain how higher living beings evolved out of lower living beings. They had no idea of life isolated from matter. They had idea of matter isolated from life.

What did they mean by higher and lower living beings? They had probably no explicit idea. They compared two species of living beings far removed from each other, and thought one to be superior to the other—superior in muscular power, in sense perception, in the capacity for defending themselves, and for committing aggressions successfully. When one

animal attacks another, tears it to pieces and eats its flesh, we say it is higher or superior to the latter. When one man can kill another, he is said to be stronger or higher. This opinion is instinctive, or it originates in commonsense or experience. But the tiger kills a man. Is he superior? He may be superior to the particular man killed by him, and that too only in muscular power, which is only one kind of power among many. We believe man to be superior to the tiger, though the man-eater may have killed a hundred human beings. But Lamarck and Darwin did not think of particular, isolated living beings. They thought of species; they thought of the difference of species. The human species is undoubtedly superior to the tiger species. For, from the earliest ages down to the present it has gradually killed out the latter. Nobody doubts that man is superior to the monkey, who has now been discovered to be his nearest relative in the animal kingdom.

It was Herbert Spencer who scientifically discovered the distinction between superior and inferior, higher and lower kind of life. The higher is more heterogeneous and complex in form, substance and power than the lower. The highest animal is not necessarily the largest, though bulk is an important factor. The power of continuous exploitation constitutes the real difference between two species. Isolated cases of exploitation do not matter. The power must be continuous. Of course, power changes by evolution or degeneration.

Beings are always becoming. A species superior at one time may become afterwards inferior. Supermen may become 'infermen.'

The British consider themselves superior to us, because they can exploit us, and have been exploiting us for generations. Until recently, we also acknowledged their superiority not only from the practical point of view, but from the theoretical also. The difference has been decreasing of late, and we are beginning to feel that the time may come when we shall not merely be equal to them, but surpass them in the scale of evolution. That four or five centuries ago they were inferior to us is admitted by all.

We have caused to think that they constitute a superior race or variety of human beings. At one time they and we were both Aryans. That was the general opinion on both sides. But the opinion had an equalising tendency. Theory leads to practice. A ruling race cannot tolerate the idea of being equated with a subject race. So they called them Nordics, a particular branch of the Aryan race. Evolution and degeneration are subtly at work. Neither of them is lazy. Their influence is either theoretical or practical or both.

The *huxxif* judges the degree of boiling by testing one grain of rice taken out of the pot on the stove. Rabindra Nath Tagore was thus tested with the result that we ceased to think ourselves inferior to Englishmen.

Even some Englishmen acknowledged the greatness of Dr. Tagore with its racial collective implications. This was intolerable to the mass of Englishmen, and in a short time an attempt was made to spread the story, ingeniously invented by an Englishman, that it had been discovered by hard antiquarian research that the Tagore family had a European origin. It was insinuated that Tagore's great-great-great-great-grandfather was a Portuguese pirate, that is, a conqueror on a small scale. Dr. Tagore strongly repudiated the idea. What the inventor of the story wanted to achieve was to deprive us of the dignity and comfort of feeling that we were nationally raised to a higher level or plane of respectability and greatness.

When W. C. Banerji was elected a member of the British Parliament, I had a talk with my Deputy Commissioner, whom I thought to be an Englishman. Finding me in a mood of exhilaration, he damped me by saying that one swallow never made a summer. I afterwards learnt that he was a Eurasian.

I have since been convinced by study that ethnology and evolution are parts of a subjective science, that is to say, that knowledge in these two branches of science is gained by what may be called religious experience or vision or intuition, whose ultimate origin lies in a busy imagination, stirred into activity by perturbed emotion. Dr. Tagore has made this clear by making the emphatic assertion that "Reality in all its manifestations, reveals itself in the emotional and

imaginative background of our mind." Religious experience, vision and intuition are mere pigments cleverly laid on this background. No body is more deeply convinced of this truth than yourself. The spiritual urge towards supramental truth-consciousness is the result of this conviction. You have clearly pointed out that vision and intuition are untrustworthy agencies of knowledge; they live in half-light and supply us with half-truths.

XXXIV.

THE truth is that though evolution has made such a noise in the world, like a drummer, its position in science is still uncertain. There was no necessity for you to mix up evolution with neo-tantrism. It has no real value for that doctrine. It was at an unlucky moment that you introduced the idea, which is a surplusage and a mischievous one for that matter. It is an exotic commodity. It has substantially weakened and corrupted the neo-tantric doctrine. It has injuriously affected the dignity of the *yoga*, by reducing the latter to the position of a subservient force. *Yoga* accelerates evolution. Why does it not take action in its own line? You have given a higher dignity to evolution than to *yoga*. You have bent the will of the spirit to the order of science. The will has lost

its freedom before the majesty of law. You have transferred your allegiance from the Divine will to law. Whenever will and order have confronted each other, the former has invariably succumbed. Science has thus conquered religion and faith. The will has always made concessions and paid tributes. Supramental light is calculated to still further debilitate the will. The will is bound to follow the light, the light will not follow the will. If the will does not follow the light, it will bring disaster. Can you deny this? But great minds do not care for consistency. You have emphatically said that "His true staff of walking is made more of a fire of faith than any ascertained and indubitable light of knowledge." Faith then is to dominate supramental light, which is the same thing as indubitable light of knowledge. I shall not further expatiate on this miserable confusion of thought. I leave you to reveal the real, psychological truth concealed behind this contradiction.

To me it seems to have been an act of unwisdom to bring law and order into the domain of religion, at least to lay such enormous emphasis on them, as contrasted with free-will—the free-will of God. God diminished Himself by creating the universe. Among all things in the universe that have caused Him diminution, law and order are the most injurious, pernicious, poisonous. You have deepened the humiliation of diminution by reminding Him that His will is no longer free, that it is useless to worship Him and His personality. It does no good reiterating the old apology,

made on behalf of the Deity that He can deviate or depart from or repeal His laws, if occasion arises to make deviation necessary, but that such occasion has never arisen. This implies that the world is perfect and happy with the laws already made. But you have many times pointed out that life is a struggle against death, disease, falsehood, pain and suffering, demonstrating the fact that the laws are bad for man, bad from the anthropocentric point of view, the view which calls for religion, reverence, admiration, devotion and worship. Take, for example, the law of Malthus. Malthus did not create the law. He only discovered it. The law itself was made by God. It may have been a good law for primitive times. It is certainly bad for civilized life. Has God any justification for not repealing it? It is causing deep and widespread misery in the most advanced countries as well as in the least. Blanco Posnet said that God created the *croup* in early days, but when he found that it was making havoc among babies, he endowed us with sufficient medical knowledge to combat it. Is any body daring enough to say that, when God found that increasing population was causing unspeakable misery, God created rubber to make effective stoppers for the relief of mothers who are upholding the world and its civilization? God is maintaining His majesty and imperial dignity by concealing Himself or by disguising Himself before man. The more you expose the truth about Him, the more precarious becomes his very existence. It were better not to know the laws of God. We have lost our faith by such knowledge, and are

becoming atheists. Neo-tantrism aims at disclosing all the secrets of the Divine administration of the universe. That way lies blasphemy and atheism. You are really doing irremediable injury to religion. I take it that your reluctance to admit that neo-tantrism is a religious movement is due to sincerity and high appreciation of truth.

XXXV.

WILLED order and ordered will mean the same thing. Will lives under constraint in both cases. Will and order are two good things isolated from each other. Both are spoiled when combined. The worst situation is reached when the two are equally strong. Religious men keep the will stronger than the order. Scientific men reverse the situation. On the whole, you seem to be more in favour of order than of will. You make will subservient to order ; yoga subservient to evolution ; religion subservient to knowledge. The very idea of supramental light has its origin in the desire to know what has been deliberately kept secret by God. Supramentalism is thus anti-religious. But you are always uncertain, facing both ways. A scientific religion is an absurd mixture. Religion has always been hostile to science. Science has now begun to be hostile to religion. Dr. Tagore has said God has become a beggar at our

door. . He asks for offerings. We do not pray to Him for favours, such as a timely shower, or a favourable direction of wind when crossing the sea.

XXXVI.

BY adopting the *kalpa* and the *yugas* you have accepted the principle of cyclicism in the ups and downs of the world. . Cyclicism is based upon destiny. Destiny is unknown causality. It causes the unexpected to happen. You have also adopted evolution. Evolution implies the existence of law and knowable order. Here again cyclicism and evolution are two good things spoilt by mixture. Oswald Spengler has made himself famous by his volumes on **The Decline of the West**. By this time, I think half a million copies of the book have been sold in spite of the high price charged for them. This shows that the book is popular, and that the cyclic idea expressed in it is favoured by half the world. The other half favour evolution. You have apparently united both halves. But what is the reality ? The mixed theory is not understood by your disciples, and is disfavoured by the rest of the world. Eclecticism is the peculiar monopoly of India. Our dishes are always mixtures. Vegetables are mixed with flesh, *dal* with rice. We like the *lafra*. We have no idea of mental hygiene. Generally, mixtures are made of mutually

hostile ingredients. The physicians (*Kavirajes*) call them *biruddha vastu*. They cannot be digested. They cause illness. Western culture and Eastern culture are mutually hostile. We are trying to mix them up. The mixing has been delayed by differences of opinion as to the proportion in which the mixture should be made. This is a most disagreeable subject. We have so far tried to keep religion free from this poisonous mixture. You are the first man who has openly introduced the mixture of cultures into our religion. Neo-tantrism will not strengthen our faith. Supramental light will ruin us. It is already a confused light, supposing that it has already come,—a confusion of will and order, of cyclicism and evolution, of *nirvana* and immortality, personal consummation and mass salvation, of dreary equality and fascinating inequality. Neo-tantrism is a religion of competition, a race for the goal and a stopping-short-five-steps-behind. It is the religion of the *samipya* form of salvation.

XXXVII.

WHAT after all is the eleventh hour evolution propounded by you? There is no evolution except towards the *kali yuga*. The rest of the *kalpa* is a continuous chain of degeneration. We are born in the *Satya yuga*. By destiny we fall to the *treta* first and then to *Dwapara* and lastly to the *kalī*. There is no turning backward. We fall and fall and fall. Then

we are pulled up by the tight rope of destiny back into the *Satya yuga*. The short period evolution at the junction between *Kali* and *Satya* is a fiction. Degeneration is evolution turned backward. After degenerating for billions of years and passing through three and half *yugas* we are said to take a turn. Why did we not take this turn while we were yet in *Satya* or the *Treta*? Were we weaker then than now? Did we gain strength in the *Dwapara* or in the first three-fourths of the *Kali*? You will probably say the principles of evolution remained latent throughout the four *yugas* and have suddenly become patent towards the close of the fourth *yuga*.

What is the object of the *yoga*? Is it to obliterate the next few years of the *Kali yuga*? The *Satya yuga* is bound to come by destiny. Why interfere with time? Why be in haste? You have the whole eternity before you and eternity consists of a countless number of *kalpas*. All that we want we shall **have in** the *Satya yuga*, in which supramental light shines through the universe without waiting for *yoga*. What a jungle of ideas!

XXXVIII.

ARE not the men of the *Satya yuga* supermen, or something in close neighbourhood with them? What makes them fall gradually from

the highest to the lowest consciousness? Are they weaker in will and *buddhi* than we? Are they incapable of making *yoga*? We generally make a confusion between the primitive man's consciousness and the *Satya yuga* consciousness in some respects. It is the result of the combination of evolution and cyclicism. The cyclicism of the *kalpa* and *yugas* is the worst conceivable by our understanding. The theory is one of despondence. It represents God as a demon enjoying Himself in the continuous deterioration of the things created by Him. Everything that man makes becomes worse and worse by the lapse of time. Our houses and furniture, our clothes and shoes deteriorate from day to day imperceptibly till at the end of the year the accumulated deterioration becomes positively bad requiring repair or renewal. During the whole of the *kalpa* composed of the four *yugas* the deterioration of human consciousness goes on uninterruptedly, and then renewal or total destruction and abandonment becomes inevitable. Does God throw away humanity at the end of each *kalpa* and create a new humanity for his delectation? Or does He repair the old humanity when they become absolutely unserviceable? We repair our shoes, as they deteriorate from time to time. Does God never think of repairing us in that way? Is not rebirth preceded by death—a process of renewal?

We are told that God incarnates Himself from *yuga* to *yuga* to investigate the condition of the world and to take necessary steps for putting it right. The most remarkable incarnation happened in the *Dwapara*

when God descended and threw away most of what was best in the world. In one sense, Bhishma, Karna and Drono were some of the best. In another sense, Duryodhan and his brothers were the dearest to God's heart, because they contributed most to the growth of the *lila*, for the enjoyment of which He had created the world as the play-ground. Krishna destroyed what was best in both senses. Is that the way in which God sets things right? The law of *lila*, the law of *karma* and the hypothesis of *kalpa* form a triangular system of contradictions, as seen by the human intelligence, by mental consciousness, probably also by the *buddhi* of the spirit, which sees everything through coloured glasses during the period of the *anishatwa*. It is supposed that supramental light will clear up the atmosphere and enable us to see everything correctly. Does this mean that whatever seems good now will reveal its badness, and whatever appears bad will be found to be good under supramental light? Our consciousness, our sentiency, our morality, our intelligence, our judgment, our sense of right and wrong, pleasure and pain will be all reversed. I mean no offence, but you seem to have achieved half of this supramental light already.

XXXIX.

EVOOLUTION is a trumpery word. It can make a noise. It has no music value. It pretends to explain everything, and really explains next

to nothing. It pretends to explain how higher life springs out of lower ; how life evolves out of matter and mind evolves out of life. Your evolution is even more ambitious ; it pretends to explain how spirit evolves out of mind. The opposite process may be called degeneration. Spirit degenerates into mind, mind into life, and life into matter. It is monistic in both ways, but it assumes spirit to be the original substance. It also assumes that in the process of transformation something of the spirit, with its original attributes, remains concealed or involved in the lower forms. Indeed it assumes that something of the higher form always remains intact in the lower form in the course of both degeneration and evolution. This something is the real factor in the transformation. Thus spirit is never absent in mind, life and matter, after the process of degeneration has once been completed. It must be borne in mind that evolution and degeneration do not take place irregularly, evolution here and degeneration there at a given moment. The universe changes as a whole, either continuously degenerating or continuously evolving. The best period in the life of the universe is the *satya yuga*, The worst is *kali*. The ordinary Hindu believes that at the end of *kali*, the universe vanishes into empty space. A new cycle then begins. Your evolution assumes that towards the close of *kali*, the universe becomes pregnant with evolution. The period of gestation ends with the end of *kali*, and what is born is the *satya yuga*, which carries the principle of degeneration within it from the very moment when parturition takes place. •

XL.

ORDINARY evolution deals with the transformation of lower forms of life into higher. It does not openly exclude degeneration, but the general trend is towards elevation. Darwin called his *magnum opus* the "**Origin of species**" That does not mean the origin of the original species, or the original form of life. It has nothing to do with the evolution of life out of matter or something in which life is wholly absent. It simply means how one species may evolve out of another species. The pre-existence of species is assumed. It may be one species or many species. Species does not mean a single individual. It means a number of individuals, probably a large number, having a number of common characteristics. No two individuals are exactly alike. This fact is suggestive of evolution. It is presumed that all individuals of a species were at one time, in the remote past exactly alike. The differences suggested the possibility of evolution. The original differences are called variations. The evolution of one species out of another means the summated total of cumulative variations. Each variation is caused by accident or unexpected deviation from the law of heredity. Evolution is the result of erratic causality. It is an irregular mixture of law and lawlessness, of order and disorder, of uniformity and multiformity.

It can have therefore no scientific value. It does **not** enable us to predict the future, like the law of gravitation which enables us to predict eclipses, the rotation of the seasons and tides. We cannot verify the truth of evolution, because we cannot create accidental variation of a favourable type, for accident is out of the control of law. We cannot accidentally die to cheat the life insurance company. Death follows the law of causation. It may come unexpectedly, because as imperfect beings we do not always expect causality to rule the world. We found our expectations half upon causes and half upon unexpected accidents. Nicholas Nickleby formed a plan to fall accidentally from a projecting girder in order to realize his insurance policy to the best advantage. But he never carried it out. It is impossible to die or to be born accidentally. A man may die of disease or snake-bite, but in both cases he dies causally. Unexpected death must not be confused with accidental death. Most things happen unexpectedly, and death is only one of a million of happenings. Evolution is said to be valuable, because it is supposed to have enabled man to discover the science of eugenics and to improved his condition by its practical application. This is a mistake. Eugenics is possible only when the law of heredity can challenge accidental variation. But luckily accidental variation is rare. Strictly speaking, eugenics is opposed to evolution. It is based upon the law of heredity, not upon accidental deviations. It wants to prevent degeneration and thereby to keep open the way to evolution. Its primary object is not to advance evolution, which depends on accidental variation.

Eugenics is not a perfect science yet, because the law of heredity is very imperfectly known, and is rendered all but nugatory by the law of gamogenesis. If we had one parent instead of two, we would have been in a better position to take advantage of the new science.

Darwin's sexual selection is opposed to accidental variation. Thus, one factor of evolution is opposed to another. Sexual selection is nothing but eugenics practised by nature. So far as evolution is supposed to be due to sexual selection, it is no new discovery. Among well-to-do families sexual selection is made by the parents of the couple, in a way calculated to facilitate evolution. Bridegroom and bride are selected physiognomically, sometimes horoscopically, that is, astrologically. A white couple produce white children. A black couple produce black children. These are well-known facts. But they are disturbed by atavism, though not very frequently. Besides, mere blackness or whiteness does not constitute the whole of the characteristics of children. The form of the body, the consciousness of the mind, i. e., intelligence, emotions, will, memory, imagination have all to be considered. Thus eugenics is in a very uncertain condition. The time may come when eugenics will be a perfect science, and sexual selection will hasten evolution even with more victorious rapidity than *yoga*. The question is, is it more profitable to study and practise the *yoga* than to study and practise eugenics? Atheists practise eugenics, religious men practise *yoga*. The best thing would

be to combine eugenics with *yoga* ; the law of heredity with the principle of rebirth. Radhakrishnan has pointed out that there is no natural opposition between the two.

The truth is evolution is in a very inchoate state, and has very little practical value. It has degraded us in the eye of God and man, and superman, if he exists at all anywhere in the universe. It has degraded the morality of individuals. It has debased political morality. It has morally debased the human race. It has made life purposeless. It has deprived us of our idealism. It has done immense mischief. It is marvellous to reflect that a saint can ever think of associating religion with evolution, the worst thing in science.

Rudolf Eucken, Nobel prize holder, has made the following interesting reflections upon the pernicious effects of evolution :— “After all the weary work of many thousand years we are to-day in a condition of painful uncertainty, a state of hopeless fluctuation, not merely with regard to individual questions, but also as to the general purpose and meaning of life. Through long ages of experience and many a painful shock of revolution, our western civilization had won to a stable and coherent system of ideas and convictions which fixed man's relation to society in a particular way, impressed a definite character upon our life, and assigned to the individual his proper position and task. The old foundations of life have been shaken and the new ones are not yet sufficiently established. Whereas the

struggle used to rage round and about such central facts as morality and religion, their basis and their precise signification, now to an ever-increasing extent, the facts themselves are questioned ; doubt arises as to whether they can really be affirmed as facts at all. At the same time man has lost his proud assured position in the universe. The supremacy of man is now more and more disputed, and specially the assertion that his place in the universe is unique. But, if this position be abandoned, what are we to make of the purpose of life ?”

You have made an attempt to counteract this despondent view of life by combining the ascent of man from the inconscience of matter with his descent from the supreme super-conscience that guides and controls the universe, by combining the morality of the monkey with the judgment of the supermind. You have traced our origin to the deepest pit as well as to the highest peak. We are rotating round a circle rather a semicircle, falling slowly by a circuitous route and rising abruptly from the lowest pole to the highest. Is there any personal glory or consummation in this rise ? Is there no painful humiliation in the fall ? The entire *kalpa* is worked by destiny. There is not an atom of evolution in it. There is not a single ray of supramental light shining in the combination of cyclicism and evolutionism. You have evolved a poisonous mixture calculated to make despair run into the slough of despondence, to make confusion worse confounded.

XLII.

I really cannot help wondering what induced you to import into your teaching such a misleading, mischievous, miserable word as evolution. There was absolutely no necessity for this unbecoming, uncomely, graceless importation. Did you want to reveal a rival theory of evolution? Was it your intention to supersede the existing theories of evolution variously named Lamarackian, Darwinian and Bergsonian. These theories do not agree with one another; and men accept one or another of them according to their own lights or whims. None of them has any practical value. No man has yet lengthened his neck by an inch by trying to reach the dinner table with his mouth, or lengthened his life by a day by his creative will-power, or has produced better children by accidental variation. The survival of the fittest implies the massacre of the majority of the race, while the fittest of one day becomes unfit for survival on the next day. The desire of survival creates appetite for leadership, and leadership creates *megalomania* and imperialism, and imperialism of flesh leads to the extinction of the race, or at least degeneration of national power. The largest beasts have ceased to struggle for existence and are now enjoying eternal rest in the world of fossils. Imperial Spain is now in a bad plight. Holland is

now crippled. England is no longer expanding, but slowly retreating into an insular hole. These are the achievements of evolution. The entire West is now declining, in the opinion of Spengler, by the power of the very machine which has made her the queen of the world. Evolution everywhere has the bad habit of calling forth degeneration. Seeing that the life of degeneration is always longer, stronger and deeper than that of evolution, we should beware of the fascinations of the latter.

Evolution has deeply penetrated into our moral life like white ants. It has entered into our political life. It has corroded our civilization and social organization. It has corrupted our life in its wholeness. Religion alone has so far escaped the poison of evolution, but it can escape it no longer. You are acting as the pioneer in the new movement. You are transferring to non-moral Nature functions hitherto performed by God and His irresistible will. Order standing against will may look charming on the face, but at heart it is pregnant with disorder in the domain of religion particularly. Evolution is the assassin of religion. It dethrones the old God and places on His throne a new God. Darwin has placed a monster, *raksasa* on the throne of the christian God. For some people it is a comfort to know that Darwin attended church to the last day of his life. These people have gleefully removed his ashes to the Westminster Abbey. But the comfort is hollow. It implies that Darwin had a dual personality, that in short he was a hypocrite, which is a nice way of showing respect for the dead.

Does any of these people know to what God Darwin addressed his invocations at Church ? To the God revealed by Christ or the one revealed by Himself ? Do they know that his prayer ran thus :—(1) May the kingdom of competition and exploitation come, (2) withhold from the weak and the unfit their daily bread, (3) never forgive our debtors for we never forget our debtors, (4) always lead us into temptation and enterprise (for without temptation there can be no evolution or civilization) and deliver the cowards unto death. The following is a supplementary prayer :— (1) May every woman be pregnant with accidental variations, (2) May the female sex enormously increase in number, beauty and strength to facilitate sexual selection by men to the utmost capacity, (3) May the unfit and helpless be killed off quickly, (4) May the struggle for existence perennially grow in hardness so that evolution and civilization may advance furiously fast with triumphant victorious rapidity.

You are going to place on the throne of God with His will-power enormously curtailed, a new God who will divide his functions between Himself and Nature ; His free will between Himself and man, who will regard man as a collaborator and a co-operator and not as a slave or instrument.

XLIII

BUT the question before me is not whether evolution has any value, but to find to what extent the theory expounded by you agrees with or differs from evolution as understood in the West.

Evolution is the process by which one species produces or changes into another. It does not mean a process by which one individual is replaced by another. It is not a process of mere becoming as understood in Indian philosophy. A wicked man may become a saint by the power of *yoga*. He does not evolve into a saint. An intelligent man may become an idiot either as the result of a disease or by the introduction of three pinhead drops of *iodine* into the *cortex* of his brain. That is a becoming, not a case of evolution or its opposite degeneration. The sainthood and idiocy are acquired qualities, which are never transmitted to offspring and cannot therefore affect the species.

A process implies the existence of one or more agents by whose action and reaction a number of things become aggregated into a specific being. For example, to create a living being, such as a dog, the following agents or ingredients are necessary:—(1) earth, (2) life involved in matter, and (3) life in a state of isolation, whose *habitat* is the vital plane. Each of these plays an openly active part. Some other agents probably play a delitescient part, viz., (1) mind, (2) supermind, (3) *sachchidananda*, all three involved in principle in the earth. What is the nature of the play? No answer. Why is not a fox instead of a dog produced? No answer. Is the life that descended from the vital plane a dog-life? No answer. Is the life that was involved in the earth in the particular case dog-life? No answer. Are the mind, supermind and *Sachchidananda* that are supposed to take a delitescient part in the production of the dog, of dog-type? No

answer. Indeed, the word evolution seems to have been violently, most arbitrarily, thrown at the phenomenon. It gives no account of the evolution of a species. It gives a most inadequate account of the creation of an individual dog. As to the creation of man, the uncertainty and obscurity are still greater.

The superman race has not yet come into existence. Whether individual supermen have done so is uncertain. It is supposed the supermind involved in the earth and supermind descending from the supramental plane will by their interplay produce a superman. It is also supposed that the supermind originally involved in the earth has gradually become weak in the plant, the animal and man. What will cause the supermind to descend from the supramental plane? No answer. But it seems to be supposed that, whatever the cause of the descent in the ordinary course may be, *yoga* has the power of strengthening that cause.

To return to the creation or evolution of the dog. What caused the dog-life to descend from the vital plane? It is insinuated and not openly stated, that the life involved in that particular mass of earth was of the bitch type. What justifies this imputation? It is said the life descended from the vital plane through one or more of the three following causes, viz., (1) a call from the material plane, like that of a prostitute on the street side, (2) an impulse in the vital itself—evidently a lecherous impulse and (3) a pressure from above the vital plane, like the pressure which parents used to exercise to induce their sons to go to bed

with their newly-married wives. That these causes have not been supramentally discovered is obvious from the introduction "It may be" four times repeated in four sentences.

At all events this sort of creation cannot be called evolution in any sense. Evolution is a popular word with our graduates and under-graduates. It has a magical power of persuading youthful minds in unexpected directions. Our youngmen easily evolve into cricket or foot-ball players, athletes, talkie and movie visitors, terrorists and religious devotees. The call of the word is irresistible.

XLIV

I have dealt with the creation of living beings. They are produced by the power of sexual impulse concealed in the earth and in living forces, powers or beings who descend from the vital plane. Now, what will cause the supermind to descend ? Has the supermind any sexual impulse, any creative or reproductive impulse ? I am not speaking here of the call of the *yoga*, for the *yoga* is an accidental phenomenon. It is essential for the evolution of man to supermanhood. All men are not *yogins* and are not likely to be. It is supposed that all men will one day become supermen before the end of eternity, *yoga* or no *yoga*. Now, what will call the supermind from below ? What impulse can cause the supermind to descend to the

earth ? What can exert a pressure from above the supermind ? It must be the pressure exerted by *Sachchidananda*. In the last case there is no evolution in any sense at all. *Sachchidananda* is God, and God can do anything He wills at any moment. Your evolution is a fiction made worse by its redundancy.

XLV.

THOUGH neo-tantrism cannot stand erect for an hour without the crutch of consciousness, yet no definition of the word has been given in any of the published documents of the cult. What is consciousness ? It is an English word, and among the English-speaking philosophers it has several conflicting meanings. Some philosophers say it has no existence. It is a mere becoming. James affirms that it is the name of a non-entity, and has no right to claim a place among 'first principles.' At best it stands for a function. Of course, the opinion of a single philosopher or prophet, however great or renowned, does not matter much. But the general trend of thought among English-speaking philosophers is towards denying the existence of consciousness as an entity, as a thing-in-itself.

God is the supreme consciousness. God is *jnanam*. But what is *jnanam* ? Is God a function or a process ? Is he a process of knowing, distinguished from that of feeling or willing ? Knowing, feeling and willing in English

philosophy are three distinct processes of the mind. Is God a mere mind ? Has he no power of expressing Himself in speaking and acting ?

God, we are distinctly told, has no desire, no purpose, no objective. Is He not the creator, the regulator, the destroyer of the *lila* which is a charming name for the universe ? Is He the creator of the universe as it is or as what it ought to be ? Shall we accept the *lila* as it is, or modify it according to our own convenience and to our light ? It is said, "we ought to act for the best according to our light." Best for whom or what ? Best for the *lila* as a whole or best for that part of it which concerns me or the Ego ? Does our light change by its own power ? Have we any hand in changing it ? If we have, shall we change it for the best according to our existing light ? Shall we borrow light from others ? What are the principles on which we should borrow it ? If we have any doubt as to what is best, how are we to act, supposing that action must be taken immediately ?

The government of a country makes laws and rules to guide us in all our actions. Has God made no such law or rule ? Is He only consciousness and nothing else ?

Can you expect an Englishman to understand the word in the sense in which you do ? And for that matter, can you expect an educated Indian to understand it as you do ? Your own education is founded upon the English language. Your consciousness is largely of the English

type. Sanskrit philosophy and the consciousness which it engenders or favours have come to you by an accident. The very idea of dynamicity, which is the cardinal principle that differentiates neo-tantrism from Vedantism, is a western idea, applied to religion. What we think best for us, we think to be best for God. We like to be active, dynamic ; therefore, God must be active and dynamic.

Sakti is will, power. It is different from dynamicity. Will is latent dynamicity. It is a potential force, not a force actually in action. Quiescence is the cardinal trait in God's character. Dynamicity is an exceptional phenomenon. A personality that can make good laws has no need of being perennially dynamic. A government has to make new laws and change old ones, because it has not the capacity for making good laws. It has to take police and military action chiefly because it cannot make good laws. Crime originates in bad laws. Man is peaceful by his inner nature. The recognition of vested interests creates troubles for society and the state. Does God recognize vested interest ? If He does not, why should He be dynamic ?

We admire you because you are so placid, and never disquieted. Your sadhaks worship you for your placidity. Are you imitating this characteristic from God ? If so, why do you revel in attributing dynamicity to Him ? The placid consciousness is admired by all, except by women who are naturally emotional, passionate, impatient. Every wrong will right itself before the end of eternity. Why should either God or man become impatient ? You have

advised your sadhaks not to be impatient for final realization. Dynamicity in God's consciousness seems to be an undesirable trait.

A complete exposition of consciousness will occupy a volume.

XLVI.

THE neo-tantric religion is a mere dot in the neo-tantric philosophy. It has no faith in the power of prayer. The spiritual world as well as the material is in the grip of law. Man is not a beggar at the door of the Divine. If he can change his consciousness in the right way he is safe. God never deviates from His own law. Whether He has the power to do so is a different question.

The Religion is founded upon the faith that God is ever leading us towards final realization ; but we are not bound to follow his lead, though it is our interest to follow it. What is God ? What is realization ? What is faith ? How to have this faith when the final realization is not known, when God Himself is not known, except as something which exists. Faith is not the product of *yoga*, but the *yoga* is founded upon faith. In spite of our ignorance, "we have to have this faith." (Page 74, '*The Riddle*').

Without a clear knowledge of the neo-tantric philosophy, the neo-tantric religion is meaningless, misleading, puzzling. I insist again that a treatise on neo-tantric philosophy is absolutely necessary.

One cannot depend upon general Indian philosophy to enlighten one regarding neo-tantric religion. The Vedantic *yoga* and the neo tantric *yoga* may be the same upto a certain point, but beyond that point the two *yogas* divert in directions with a great obtuse angle between them. That Vedantic philosophy is particularly pernicious has been forcibly explained. In its ultimate aim Vedantism is identified with *Buddhism*. In the mode of carrying on life the same identity is visible. I understand that Vedanta is taught at the *asram*. The purpose of this teaching seems to be obscure, unless it be to warn the sadhaks specifically against its influence. But such warning introduces the spirit of criticism which is injurious to creation of faith, while faith is the foundation of religion.

I have no difficulty in acknowledging that the *asram* is not a religious association. It is not an association of Hindus or Mussalmans, Christians or Buddhists. Even men who have no religious faith are admitted to it. Spiritual philosophy, that is, metaphysics is taught in the *asram*. But what is the purpose of this teaching? I am not writing this letter to criticize the method of realizing the excellent ideal of the unity of the human race. But ancient Indian ideals are all

individualistic. A philosophy which regards a Brahmin's wife to be a sudra or something like it can have no idea of universal brotherhood. The best *yogins* had either no wives or separated themselves from the latter. They struggled like the unfortunate spirits who, separated by death from their bodies, failed to isolate themselves from their lives and minds. An attentive study of the Vedanta may either lead the sadhak to seek for premature *nirvana*, or create in him a violent critical spirit injurious to any form of spiritual faith. Then again to discard something which has ruled our Indian consciousness for countless generations is an adventure of tremendous difficulty. It is apt to disintegrate our consciousness and make *yoga* futile. Faith is the foundation of religion. Its material consists in ignorance and not doubt. One who believes, like Dr. Radhakrishnan, "that a man becomes more religious in proportion to his readiness to doubt and not his willingness to believe" is incapable of believing anything except perhaps his own autocratic existence. He is incapable of believing the existence of God, to say nothing of His goodness and beauty. For example, he is incapable of believing that God, whoever He may be, is constantly leading him towards final realization. He is incapable of believing that the final realization is a good thing for man. He would try to escape from it, to evade it, to parry it off, at least to retard its progress.

The spirit of criticism, with its inseparable accident of the doubt-complex, is an evil spirit. It has to be exorcised like the spirits that tormented the wretched man

on the Gadarene coast, whom Christ saved at great cost to the owner of a herd of thirty thousand swine. I mean no personal irreverence, but I cannot honestly conceal the idea that the attempt to create faith by developing the critical spirit is an experiment which has very little chance of success.

XLVII.

THE *asram* is not a religious association. But it has a religious aim. It has an ideal. Any body who persists in staying in it with any other ideal ought to be turned out. It is not a mere '*darsan tol*'. Even supposing that the ideal of human unity is not an essential feature of the teachings, receptivity to the Truth, that is, the neo-tantric truth, the discovery of the dynamic Divine self and consciousness, and a higher evolution of nature by a particular process of *yoga* together constitute a definite religion. The *asram* is surely not a theosophical society. But even a theosophical society is a religious association. It insists on good knowledge, and so long as that knowledge is definite, and does not merely consist of discursive suggestions and possibilities, the theosophist has a religion.

Religion means the pursuit of an ideal. Individual salvation is the ideal of the Vedantist. The salvation of the human race is the ideal of the neo tantrist. The Vedantic salvation means *nirvana*. The neo-tantric

salvation means a dynamic life in supramental light, that is, superconscient life, which is a state of consciousness, the very "reverse of our own." Of course, the neo-tantrist has no prayer to make. He does not depend upon the grace of God, but upon his own efforts to compel Divine co-operation, founded upon causality.

Religion is auto-centric, ethno-centric or anthropocentric. Neo-tantrism is anthropocentric. Vedantism is auto-centric. Old tantrism was probably ethno-centric, for the *asuras* whose destruction was aimed at, were ethnologically different from the Aryans. True religion in Europe to-day is ethno-centric.

XLVIII.

RELIGION being purposive, it is natural for it to pragmatise truth, that is, to deny the independent existence of truth. Truth becomes a subject of human manipulation. It is associated with beauty and usefulness and God trifurcates himself into *satyam*, *sivam*, *sundaram*. Beauty and utility override truth in the heart of pragmatism. Religion is pragmatic, however much we may pretend to repudiate the idea. God is what we wish Him to be. The conflict between Religion and Science is ultimately traceable to the fact that Science seeks for truth as it is, whereas Religion seeks for truth as we wish it to be. Science seeks for

truth ; religion seeks for beauty and moulds truth in the *matrix* of beauty. Science does not care for good or evil, for beauty or ugliness. It is beyond them. Religion seeks for goodness and beauty and repels evil and ugliness. It wants truth to be plastic and amenable to the pressure of necessity.

Ananda is the ideal of all religions. It is higher, more refined and permanent than happiness. The pursuit of truth is ancillary to the pursuit of bliss and beatitude. Truth proves to be false when it fails to bring *ananda*. It must accept service under *ananda* or submit to rejection, that is, replacement by another truth. *Nirvana* was at one time one of the highest truths. *Nirvana* has now been found to be antagonistic to *ananda*, because it closes the door to personal consummation. It has now become an untruth, and neo-tantrism tramples upon it in season and out of season.

It cannot be denied that science is advancing at the expense of religion. Religion cannot bear the heat and contact of science. In India religion is rampant, because there is no science to burn it.

Science seeks for truth. It does not necessarily find it. But the untruth of science does not prove the truth of religion. We live in a world of untruths and half-truths. "Life is a difficult journey, a battle and struggle, an often painful and chequered growth, a life besieged by obscurity, falsehood and suffering." That is our destiny. We cannot improve life either by denying

or by admitting the existence of God. Neither Russell nor Ramkrishna can tell us whither we are going or even where we ought to go. The Divine does not manifest Himself so as to be recognized in the external world-circumstances. He remains concealed in matter. He is inconscient, at best subconscient. The perception of inadequacy, suffering and evil is the starting point of the spiritual urge. This urge causes men to think that things are not what they ought to be. He seeks for a place where there is no suffering and evil, on the mere assumption that there is such a place, though its exact position in the universe is not known. He goes out adventurously in quest of this heavenly place, in the hope that like Columbus he might at length come in contact with land. Columbus reached land, but the land was not what he had supposed it to be. It was not Kublai Khan's territory. It was not *Eldorado*. It was not paradise. Man has made many experiments to find God and *ananda*, and all these experiments have failed. But his persistence is wonderful. Every prophet thinks his is the last experiment. But one experiment succeeds another without any appreciable advance to God and bliss. Neo-tantrism is the latest experiment. We wait to see if it proves to be the last. But truth does not consult our wishes, except for pragmatists.

XLIX.

NEO-tantrism labours under a peculiar difficulty. Its spiritual urge is weak, because it is not certain that this is an unideal world, and sometimes even

thinks that "the world is born of *ananda* and living by *ananda*, wheeling from *ananda* to *ananda*." Who will launch upon a trans-oceanic adventure to seek for *ananda*, when *ananda* is so plentiful at home? "*Ananda* and *sakti*, these are the two real terms of existence. Sorrow and weakness are *vikaras* born of *ajnanam*," of the forgetfulness, stupidity, and ease-loving nature of the high and true self of men. But these men live in special localities and the *kali yuga* is the period. The earth is an insignificant place and the *kali yuga* is an insignificant part of the *kalpa*.

I have not written this paragraph out of a scoffing spirit. I have written it only to show the danger of brevity and elegance of style mixed with a little emotionalness and fragmentariness. I want to show clearly that a complete treatise is absolutely necessary to make neo-tantrism intelligible, compact and comprehensive.

The above quotations are given from "**Yogic Sadhan.**" The editor has pointed out in his epilogue that the book is incomplete and suffers from brevity. You will, I hope, not be offended by my insisting on a fuller treatment of vitally important matters. I am writing all this because I am interested in neo-tantrism. If neo-tantrism has no value it should be flung away. If it has value it ought to be made clearer. Truth is valuable only when it is fully expressed.

I have some idea of the difficulties of a new philosophy of life. The intellect gives us untruths and probable truths. Intuition gives untruths, uncertain truths

and half-truths. Half-truths are worse than untruths. These are responsible for most of India's miseries. In quest of a false realization we have lost all our actual possession. We are weak in body, life and mind, because we have neglected all of them under Vedantic inspiration, while we have pursued a false spirituality. The ancient *rishis* gave us brief accounts and boastfully gave us what they regarded as the whole truth in half a *sloka* (*slokardhen*). You know best what poison they gave us in the shape of *nirvana* and the unreality of the world. They left us no desire to move, to be active or dynamic. I am sure you do not wish to give us truths in a form liable to corrosion by the corrupting influence of commentaries and annotations and criticisms. Sankara, you are aware, was the worst enemy of Vedantism as it emanated from the *rishis*. How would you feel if neo-tantrism suffered in the same way? The ancient *rishis* had good excuse for being brief. They had no pen and paper, no script. You possess all these advantages. In addition, you possess a more expansive language.

L.

YOU have criticised science as proceeding upon a wrong method of acquiring truth, and resulting in the acquisition of mere probable truths. You have criticised intuition thus:—"This intermediate zone

is a region of half-truths and that by itself would not-matter, for there is no complete truth below the supermind ; but the half-truth here is often so partial or even ambiguous in its application that it leaves a wide field for confusion, delusion and errors." Again :—"The transition through this intermediate zone—not obligatory, for many pass by a narrower and surer way—is a crucial passage ; what comes out of it is likely to be a wide and rich creation, but when one founders there, recovery is difficult, painful, assured only after a long struggle and endeavour." "The intellect is incapable of knowing the supreme truth ; it can only range about seeking for truth and catching fragmentary representations of it, not the thing itself" or the thing-in-itself.

You have nowhere explained how you have gained all this knowledge, whether intellectually, intuitionally or supramentally. As to the existence of supramental light it is said, "there have been glimpses of the supermind till now, sometimes an indirect influence or pressure." It is said also, "those levels are not yet the supermind, but they can receive something of its knowledge." Is all your knowledge limited to these glimpses and indirect influence or pressure ? Is it part of the indefinite something of supramental knowledge which can be gained by intuitive *yoga* ? How can you be sure that the glimpses are not impositions played by the little gods, *daityas* and positively "hostile beings, who want to create, to materialize something or to enforce a mental and vital formation in the earth-life and are eager to use or influence or even to possess the

thought and will of the sadhak and make him their instrument for the purpose?" There are also "hostile beings, whose sole purpose is to create confusion of the *sadhana* and disastrous unspiritual error."

Who are these beings? Are they products of evolution from below or creation from above? Do they include spirits of old Vedantists, separated from their bodies, but not yet separated from their lives and minds, and therefore still living on the earth, unable "to go to the psychic world for rest"? Are they psychic seeds and sparks with an evil nature? It is said they come out different in power and nature, when they start in the race of life. Are they evil spirits specially created by God for the enrichment of the *lila*? Are the sorrows and miseries of the world the doings of these spirits? The '**Holy Bible**' tells us that a wretched man on the Gadarene coast was saved by Christ at the expense of a herd of thirty thousand swine. Are these evil spirits agents who work for the corruption of Sadhaks and *yogins*? Are they mental beings of a bad sort who descend upon bad animals to evolve bad men? Do they belong to "the occult hierarchy of beings, who stand above the present manifestation and put themselves into it with results which will obviously be just such a stupendous difference of degree and even intervene by descending into the play through the gates of birth in human nature?"

LI.

WHAT is Nature or human nature ? It is said Nature is non-moral. Huxley discovered the non-moral character of Nature. "She uses forces and processes moral, immoral and *amoral* for working out her business." Nature has two aspects, outward and inward. "In the outer aspect Nature makes conditions for an ingenious variety of the play of life," that is, of the *lila*. "Nature in the deeper aspect as a conscious spiritual power is concerned with the growth, by experience, of the spiritual development of the souls she has in her charge and these souls themselves have a say in the matter." Is not Nature in the outer aspect a spiritual power ? Thus there are two natures in addition to the soul and whose function it is to give directions to our activities. The soul is a portion of God, and apart from the soul God has two aspects, viz., the transcendental and the cosmic. Thus, there are five powers to guide and control our activities. It is wonderful we do not eschew all activity in bewildering perplexity. The outer nature enriches the *lila*, the inner nature impoverishes it, the soul is paralysed, and neither of the two aspects of the Divine will plainly tell us what they want us to do, but seem to enjoy our discomfiture. This itself is a vital part of *lila*. Nature seems to be more powerful than the souls, which are her wards. At the same time the soul is *Iswara* and the will is its minister. It is *anumanta*, but it seems to be a subordinate officer—subordinate to Nature.

To clearly explain these mysteries, paradoxes and contradictions will require a volume. The treatise must consist of several volumes. Fragmentary answers to fragmentary questions asked at random can hardly satisfy the needs of a true Sadhak. The opinion of all the sadhaks who stay at the asram may be taken. I deliberately exclude the off-time sadhaks who devote a fraction of their leisure time to yogic *sadhana* as a matter of amusement. Several of them were one evening engaged in making inventories of objects which required supramental light to be open to human knowledge, as if there were objects the truth of which could be known and realized without such light. The latter type included postal, engineering, medical and legal (profession). To be plain, one of the sadhaks was an officer of the Post Office, a second was an engineer, a third was a medical man and the fourth a lawyer. Each of them had in his house a room set apart for intensive meditation. They are all engaged in a pleasant *lila*. Their object is to cut off a few years out of a hundred million years of rebirths, ignorance and inconscience. These sadhaks are of the type who, while they fully believe that *yoga* can quicken the pace of evolution with victorious rapidity, are not in a hurry for supramental light, for they have eternity before them. They want to exhaust *lila* before supramental light descends upon them.

LII.

NATURE, human nature, outer nature, inner nature, *Swabhava*—these words have been used somewhat loosely. Souls issue out of the Divine sub-

tance, which is consciousness, at different times, in different conditions, unequal in power and nature to run the race of *lila*. What is this nature? In what does the inequality of nature in two souls consist? What is the meaning of power? Is it power to overpower nature or to overpower other souls? When did Nature bifurcate herself into outer and inner nature? It appears Nature has in her charge many souls, and consults them when she thinks necessary, or under given laws. The inner nature is a "conscious spiritual power." What is the outward nature or nature in her outward aspect like? What is the nature of this Nature? Is it a spiritual power or a mental or a vital power? Is it a power outside the spiritual, mental and vital? Has it consciousness, or is it inconscient like matter? The words conscient, subconscient, superconscient appear to have been used in two distinct senses each. Inconscient is that of which man has no consciousness. It also means that which itself has no consciousness.

What is *Swabhava*? "*Swabhava* opposes the perfection of the will,—why? Because the nature of humanity is imperfect, or only partly evolved, *Asiddha*." What is the nature of humanity? Is it the nature of all the souls, now dwelling in the human race as contrasted with the souls now existing in animals? Is this nature different from that of other souls at the start? Is nature changeable? Does the nature of a good man change for the worse in the course of experience through the *lila*?

"*Swabhava* is imperfect nature." The imperfect *Swabhava* says, "I do not wish to be perfect, I am accus-

tomed to imperfection and find it easy and comfortable." Has the inner nature or nature in her deeper aspect no name in the Sanskrit language ?

It appears the Sanskrit *Swabhava* wants to make the *lila* more and more attractive. While the purpose of nature in her deeper aspect is to impoverish and hasten the decline of the *lila*, by making it progressively unattractive.

Swabhava is a bad thing. It is the duty of the will to throttle the *Swabhava*, and remove the obstacle in the way of its own perfect development and action. The soul ought not to enter upon active life until the *Swabhava* has been completely overpowered. "The will, when it begins to act, will be hampered by the *Swabhava* ; therefore until you are able to act on the *Swabhava*, you will not, should not bring your will to bear upon life."

Who created this nasty *Swabhava* ? Is it the nature with which the soul issued out of the spark as a Divine substance ? Did God create her as a handicap in the man-race of life ? Was the principle of evil already existent in the Divine when the *lila* was started ?

LIII.

LILA has growth and decay. Did God create the *lila* as an everlasting play—a play to become indefinitely richer and richer with the lapse of time ? Where and when does the growth of the *lila* cease, if it

ceases at all ? Has God fixed any limit to the growth of *lila* ? If so, have we passed the climacteric point of it ? Is it now declining ?

The world has a confused morality, because it does not know when and where the climax of the *lila* is reached. During the growth of the *lila* it is our duty to enrich it by giving full play to discriminative 'love and strife.' This duty is reversed when God wishes the *lila* to decline. To try to impoverish the *lila* during its growth is sinful. It is rebellion against the Divine will. The attempt to enrich the *lila* during its decline is equally sinful. The outer nature was created for the growth of the *lila*, the inner nature, for its decay. The outer nature is evil when it survives the climax. The inner nature is evil when it shows precocity and interferes during the period of growth. It is an *enfant terrible*. But how are we to know when the *lila* grows to the climax intended by God ? All prophets so far have ignorantly assumed that the *lila* came to its climax before the evolution of man, or the creation of him. This assumption being wrong, the religions founded by them have ceased to be effective. They compelled men to swim against the current,—the current of Divine will. The failure of these founders is better known to you than any one else. One prophet kills another—you are the latest.

The prophets preached the morality of the decline during the growth of the *lila*, and offended God. I believe the *lila* is still growing. It is growing in the West more

vehemently because the will of God and man are working in the same direction. Civilization is synonymous with *lila*. We are backward in civilization, because we are forward in opposing the Divine will. We are doing so unconsciously no doubt, but God never interferes with our freedom. In the differences between the East and the West God finds a novel form of *lila*. Neo-tantrism seems to feel that the *lila* is growing, and therefore it preaches dynamicity, the dynamicity of the Divine and the dynamicity of man. But it is uncertain in its behaviour. It preaches yoga for final realization, and stops short when final salvation is in sight. It stops short "for personal, divinely individual consummation." It wants to prolong the *lila* in a higher form. Cricket, football, hockey, golf and polo are all forms of *lila*. Polo is the highest game or *lila*. The game played by the supramental being is necessarily higher than what is played by mere mental beings. The *yoga* allows no activity. It is mere meditation, thought, metaphysics, speculation. But reality comes out irresistibly when it is said. "If it is the godhead, that I realize, losing in it all personal self, that is a very wide realization, but I become a mere channel of the universal power and there is no personal or divinely individual consummation for me." The utterance is truly heroic. I have already said, service is service whoever be the master. Who can be really fond of service? Indian mentality has gloriously identified itself with slave-mentality. When we see an unbeliever we exclaim, "there goes the man who has no master to take care of him," like the American slave during the period of transition from slavery to emancipation. Slavery

has permeated into our bone and marrow. We have lost all thought of personal consummation and glory. I admire the heroism, but cannot forget the contradiction. Yoga and dynamicity cannot stand together. They contradict each other. They repel each other.

LIV.

IT may be argued that the *lila* is eternal, and at any given moment it is both growing and decaying, growing here and decaying there, growing in the West and decaying in the East, growing in the New world and decaying in the Old, and that it is impossible to ascertain the general tendency of the *lila*. and every part of the world follows its own whim. This is precisely the reason why the morality of the West is different from that of the East; and this is how the religion of Christ intended for the East being accidentally transplanted in the West has caused a tremendous moral confusion. To add to the spiritual misfortune of the East, the morality of the West is now being transported to the East to make the confusion worse confounded. Our inner nature has assumed the outer aspect and is introducing manifold variety in the decaying *lila* with grotesque effects. Our morality and our religion are both perplexed and confused. We are distressfully in need of accurate knowledge as

to whether God has become tired of the growth of the *lila*, and desires it to be ended as quickly as possible.

Our ancient *rishis*, *e. g.*, the Vedantists, having wrongly assumed that the *lila* was decaying in their time, have ruined our interest in both the worlds. We are becoming unfit for life in this world, while we have not become fit for it in the other world. If neo-tantrism could boldly and convincingly declare that the *lila* was still growing in this twentieth century, we might follow a definite code of morality. But neo-tantrism leaves us in doubt on this vital question, and we do not know how to carry on life. Europe has lost her soul and gained the world. We are losing both of them. In our confusion we are assimilating all that is bad morality in the West, while relinquishing all that is good morality in the East. To me nothing seems more detestable and fatuous than the attempt to make a miscellaneous mixture of the East and West by propaganda. Let us serenely depend upon the course of evolution. Let us not muddle it by volitional action. It is better to drift than to swim against the tide. It is economical at least. Prophets are rising in India to prescribe the precise mixture that we need for the purpose of recovering possession of both the worlds at once, and of placing ourselves in a position superior to that of the West, where the better one of the two worlds has been lost. Let us pray to God, let us seek for supramental light, to know the supreme will and intention as to the time when the *lila* will attain its zenith and begin to decline, either in the world as a whole or in our hemisphere. I believe it has not yet reached the climax.

LV.

WHAT is *lila* ? It is the play of love and strife. Pure love makes it dull. Pure strife makes it barbarous. Love and strife must both have play in the *lila*. The secret lies in the precise proportion of love and strife in the mixture, to make it most attractive, delicious for God and man. God's consciousness is immutable ; but man's consciousness is incessantly changing by evolution, and the evolution is accelerated by *yoga*. Hence men with different consciousnesses have different opinions regarding the quality of the *lila*. They erroneously but naturally assume that God's consciousness at any given moment coincides with their own. We do not know what is good or bad *lila*, and what is worse is that we do not know what God thinks about the *lila* at any epoch of history. All these inadequacies have created a colossal confusion and we are most miserably floundering in the ocean of life. We want to know the truth. The truth cannot be transparently explained in a few terse and elegant sentences in replying to letters addressed by immature minds.

LVI.

BEING perplexed by ignorance of God's will each of us consults his own wish and tries either to enrich the *Lila* or to impoverish it so far as he himself is concerned. Religion has become individualistic. Those

who wish to impoverish it adopt *yoga*, while those who wish to enrich it become lovers, politicians, warriors, diplomats or commercial swindlers. There are some men who make a mixture and enter into service and adopt *Yoga* at the same time. These are the off-time *Sadhaks* among whom I count some of my nearest relations.

LVII.

THE *lila* is full of perplexities. Its most perplexing feature is that it compels us to be materialists in youth, idealists in prime, and confusionists in old age. The discourse on materialism, in the book entitled '**Evolution**,' is a brilliant essay which convincingly proves that it is our destiny to believe that we are matter, born of matter, living in matter, dying in matter and decomposed in matter at last. Our joys and sorrows are inextricably bound up with matter. We cannot escape from it. We are bound in matter, imprisoned in matter, we find our freedom in matter. It is all matter within us. It is all matter without us. Our self is matter, our environment is matter. To try to shake ourselves free from matter prematurely is sheer folly,—a dangerous folly.

When the time is up we automatically become idealists. We cannot help it. We now begin to think we are spirit, born of spirit, living in spirit, dying in spirit, absorbed in spirit, become one with the universal

spirit. All our joys and sorrows are spiritual. The spirit keeps us bound to ignorance by its errors, stupidities, negligence and love of ease. The spirit is *Iswara*, living in ignorance, a dupe and a puppet in the hands of *buddhi*, *manas*, *chitta* and *prana*, all of whom work for their selfish interest, though ordained by God to be mere instruments or slaves or subordinate officials. When the spirit has fallen to the lowest depth, when we have reached the bottom of misery and foolery, the spirit suddenly becomes conscious of its original dignity, power and will. It takes time to emancipate itself, to rise out of the unfathomable pit to become *anumanta* (commander), *sakshi* (witness), *bhokta* (enjoyer) and *bharta* (supporter). As *anumanta* it gives command to the will ; as *sakshi* it watches the working of the will ; as *bhokta* it eats and drinks, enjoys sexual pleasure and automatically reproduces the species. It also enjoys the works of creative art, including raiment, fragrance, sweet sounds, beautiful scenery and the flavour of food ; it enjoys dancing, music, painting, poetry and position in society. As *bharta* it exploits Nature and neighbour, struggles for existence, accepts slavery or service and conducts business.

In old age man becomes a confusionist. He mixes up idealism with materialism with all their concomitants, inseparable accidents, their joys and sorrows, their exploitations and meditations, their imperfection and purity, their corruption and sublimation, their ignorance and knowledge, their darkness and light, their untruths and half-truths,

their full lights and half lights. He seizes upon young men and compels them to become old at once, with grey hair, withering flesh, duality of mental structure; to cast away science, to cultivate garrulity, and preach to all men the beauty and benefit of taillessness.

All these belong to the *Lila* over which we have no real control. The materialistic period of life is passed during the growth of the *Lila*, the idealistic period during the decay. Old age makes a confusion of the growth and decay (Read the essay on Materialism).

LVIII.

THIS thesis convincingly proves why all primitive idealism has failed in the world. Vedantism, Buddhism, Platonism and Christianity have failed because the prophets had no materialistic experience. They tried to jump over it and stumbled. Vedantists and Buddhists have had no *nirvana*. Christians have never gone to Heaven and Christ is enjoying a fine *sinecure*. Platonists are all lodged in Hades. God never allows any step in the process of evolution to be escaped. The steps may be passed quickly or slowly, but they must be gone through, unconsciously, subconsciously or consciously. Newton was unconscious of numerous steps in working out algebrical problems. His admirers have now discovered the theory of the unconscious and that of the subconscious. God

dwells in the subconscious region of the mind, that is, we are unconscious of His existence within us. But He Himself is conscious. He is consciousness itself, not merely an abstraction, but a concrete reality. He is super-consciousness. He is liable to lose His super-consciousness by error, stupidity, negligence and listlessness, but only temporarily. As soon as He finds that He has been duped by anybody He girds up His loins, and tolerates no nonsense in His subordinate officials, and resumes His super-consciousness, and angrily separates Himself from us and resumes His absoluteness.

The theory of the unconscious explains the doctrine of idealism in its wholeness, and this theory has issued out of the materialistic heart. Materialism is thus a necessary prerequisite of idealism.

“European thought already tends to point behind all manifest activity to an unmanifest called, according to intellectual predilection, either the inconscient or the subconscient which contains more and in a way unseizable to us, knows more and can see more than the surface existence. Out of this unmanifest the manifest constantly emerges.” God is unmanifest, inconscient or subconscient in the passive sense, but superconscient in the active sense. Out of this unmanifest issues all the manifest material world. Though unmanifest for sometime it is not so for all time. The object of idealism is to make manifest the unmanifest. Ordinary human consciousness is not adequate for this lofty purpose. Supramental consciousness is necessary. The object of neo-tantrism is to reach this

supramental light-plane by *yoga*. Apart from *yoga* evolution is slowly and steadily carrying us towards this lofty plane. *Yoga* is intended to accelerate the pace of evolution, by an unconscious passage through numerous steps up the ladder. However, we must not be in a hurry, for sometime before the end of eternity we are destined to reach the peak. At the same time it would be sheer folly to waste our time on a lower plane, fraught with sorrows and miseries. When a more enjoyable life is available, why should we be content with a less enjoyable life? Why travel third class when first class is available? Why read by lamp light when electric light is available? Why send your message by post when the telephone is ready? Why walk on the crowded street when a motor car is in your garage?

The supramental light is not a flat plane—a mere table-land. We can climb to observatory hill if we choose. But there is danger. You meet the cosmic Godhead there, and cannot help being enslaved by Him. It is better to work on the cart road as a carter with your free-will and individuality untouched, for here is personal glory. This is the last secret of neo-tantrism. We prefer to live in close propinquity to God but not in contact with Him. We prefer *samipya* to *sayujya*. We love God but we love our personality more. We do not wish to rebel against God. We wish to consult him in everything and cooperate with Him with our independence retained. Do not Canada and Australia co-operate with England? But they do not wish to be ruled from London.

This is the ultimate distinctive secret of neo-tantrism. It is dynamic in character. It hates repose. It hates self-extinction or annihilation. Annihilation is no doubt our final destiny. But we must try to escape it as long as possible. That is supermanliness. Materialists courageously bear their sufferings on the earth plane. Russell says, 'We must accept the universe as it is and expect nothing from it. It is more manly to believe in the actual and suffer it than revel in the absurd.' That is manliness, not supermanliness.

If Russell knew that supramental light was available he would never have made this statement. He is right according to his own light, but his light is dim.

The question is what is supramental light and how to have it? Is it like the moon which the child cries for and cannot be quieted until hunger or sleep overtakes him? The object of *yoga* is not only to reach the supramental plane, but to bring it down to earth-consciousness. What will actually happen we do not know. But it is clear the *lila* will lose all its fascinations. It will be the last chapter of it. Man will cease to wonder. He will cease to admire and revere God. He will cease to worship Him. The man who knows every secret of life is a wonderful personality. But he is a dangerous creature, a miserable being. Aladin was ruined by his lamp. He possessed everything and enjoyed nothing. The following quartette is applicable to him :—

"Oh, don't the days seem lank and long,
When all goes right and nothing goes wrong ;
Ain't your life extremely flat
With nothing at all to grumble at ?"

This account of neo-tantrism written in a simple pastoral style is fairly intelligible, though not complete. To give a complete account will require a large treatise. Urbanity of manners and elegance of style, when serious business is concerned, are suicidal. Polite literature is for idle men, who are naturally frivolous and have nothing better to do than to amuse themselves aesthetically. A *lathi* charge is better than rifle shooting when the ground has to be cleared of an obstinate crowd of respectable-looking men, who make speeches not to convince people but to elicit admiration.

Intellectual thought being concerned with untruth and half-truth, is necessarily obscure. To conceal the obscurity great writers heap upon it volumes of words, smoky rather than fiery. Clemenceau had a general disgust of gas and smoke in war. In his grand work, **"In the evening of my thought,"** he has shown how Religion and Metaphysics try to gas-and-smoke at Materialism. Rationalism with Authoritarianism makes a bad mixture. It is often supposed that truth becomes truer when it secures a large number of votes. European voters have a higher respectability than Indian voters. European thoughts seem to have a higher authority than Indian. We call upon the ancient *rishis* to come to light again to find delight in the support which European

thoughts ~~are~~ giving to their own. We admire the Vedanta and reject all its doctrines by the power of words. These are things that never trouble the mind of the countryside. They belong to city life. The theory of the unconscious and the subconscious which imply that the nervous system is still somewhat undeveloped can be easily interpreted by the power of words to mean the thing-in-itself, the true reality, the divine consciousness in disguised concealment, the *anumanta*, the unseen *Iswara*, the true self, the original emanation from the Divine substance that came to conquer Nature and became a captive by misadventure and tactless mismanoeuvre, that boldly sallied out of the Divine barrack to make a fascinating *lila* and stumbled in a pitfall, without any knowledge as to how to rise out of it.

LIX.

THE distinctive foundational fact of neo-tantrism is the dynamic Divine Truth, as contrasted with the habitually quiescent nature of the Vedantic deity. After all the difference is one of degree. Each of them is a personality. It is a personality immensely superior to that of men, but still something of the same nature, for the superiority is ultimately effaceable. It possesses all the attributes of men, albeit in superlative form. It possesses nothing else. The very idea of personality derives from that of man. If it possessed anything fundamentally

different, man could never reach final realization. He could never lose his individuality in it. He could never equalize himself with him. He could never say, "I am *Iswara*." It is no doubt a glory for man to be able to say so. But is it equally glorious for God ? Does God feel any pride in thinking that man is equal to Him ?

At least all men are not equal to Him. He created or threw out the souls with different power and nature, and He threw them out at different times. Some of these souls were unequal to God at the very start. Differences were created among the souls to make the *lila* more attractive. What could happen afterwards to make the souls equal among themselves, and equal to God ? There is no indication of such happening. There are differences among the *yoyins* ; there are differences among the *sadhaks*. There are differences among those who have supramentalized their nature. The whole system is based upon difference. If differences continue to exist till the very moment of the collapse of the individuality, how can we comprehend that all differences are wiped out after that fateful moment ? "The souls come out in different conditions, different in power and different in nature." The souls go in different in conditions, power and nature. All of them cannot claim the right of "*Iswarhood*."

This strikes at the very root of the *yoga*. The *sadhak* must believe himself to be *Iswara*. To tell every *sadhak* to believe that he is *Iswara* is to tell him to believe a lie. From the first sally down to the starting point of the

yoga there has happened nothing to wipe out the differences. The differences must have increased during the *lila*, for they were meant to make the latter more attractive.

LX.

THE term dynamic Divine truth is more or less obscure. What is the nature of the dynamicity? The first idea that strikes us is that a dynamic being is a hero—an adventurous hero, a warlike being. Nietzsche was thus struck, and Spengler supports him. For several centuries the people of England thought that God's chief function was to fight and humiliate the French. British poets still impress upon their children the glories of Agincourt. Old tantrists thought that the function of God was to fight the *asuras*, whose children have now been reduced to the position of Harijans, mainly due to God's favour, rather the favour of the goddess, *Sakti*. In Bengal, every year in autumn we still worship this Deity and ask Her to give us plenty of wives and sons and help us to kill the *asuras*. In course of time, instead of killing the *asuras* we enslaved them, and their descendants are Harijans. Thus tantric Hinduism has lost its *raison d'être*. But neo-tantrism is different from old tantrism in fundamental matters. You have referred to the *asuras* at several places in your writings. *Asuric* forces are contrasted with Divine powers or powers of the Gods. An allied race

are called *daityas*. These have lost their heroism. Their chief function now is to mislead sadhaks, for what they have lost in heroism they have gained in treachery and wickedness.

This then is the chief meaning of dynamicity. But God must have other kinds of dynamicity also, though you have not mentioned them specifically. God must have an ideal personality. He is the ideal of man,—the ideal man. He must have ideal morality, ideal intelligence, ideal passions, sympathies, antipathies &c. You have not entered into the details of idealism. I believe the ideal man and the superman ought to be one and the same thing. Your idealism requires intellectual, aesthetic, economic and animal life to be relinquished. Dr. Tagore's ideal man relinquishes nothing. He proceeds by curbing and stressing. Differences of this kind between teachers of the same epoch are regrettable. Faith finds no secure place to squat upon.

LXI.

THE equality of God and man is a monstrous idea in metaphysical speculation. It is peculiar to Indian philosophy. It is the perfection of snobbery and megalomania that suggested this idea. Our ancient conquering ancestors knew that they were superior to the *asuras*. The idea of inequality was carried far.

Having subdued the *asuras* they began to feel the inequality between one Aryan and another, and this idea of inequality was carried too far. It disgusted their offspring. The idea of inequality bounded backward. Our ancestors never did things by halves. They attacked their very gods. They obliterated the difference between one god and another, and eventually found that there was only one God. The move toward Monism was carried further. Man became identified with God. But practical experience challenged it. A compromise had to be made. Man was identical with God at the start. He fell from Him. But he carried with him the power of identifying himself with Him again. It was an ambitious enterprise. He exploited the goodness of God in his imagination, and discovered many ways of rising back to Godhead.

Neo-tantrism has knocked this idea on the head. Man never was equal to God. He may approach Him but he cannot penetrate or percolate into Him. He can lose himself in Him, but that does not mean transubstantiation. He can cooperate with Him but not on coordinate terms. He must acknowledge his subordination, and act according to His will. He can by no means impose his own will upon Him. He cannot impoverish the *lila* while God wishes to enrich it, neither can he enrich it when God wishes to make it dull and flat and eventually to throw down the drop scene. But he is at liberty to hasten and accelerate the rise or the fall of the *lila* when God wishes it. His only difficulty is that he does not know what God wishes. He acts for the best according to his lights, but the light is dim. His duty,

is to brighten the light, to convert intellectual light into supramental light, to invent electric light to replace lamp light fed by castor oil. His duty is to surrender himself to God as far as possible without losing the dignity of his personality and his sense of individual divine consummation.

LXII.

RELIGION and metaphysical speculation are profoundly associated. Neither can exist without the other. Mythology is a branch of metaphysical speculation. It creates concrete personalities out of abstract ideas. Poetry is a creative art. Imagination is its instrument. The metaphysical speculator invites poetry to create a Religion. India is the breeding ground of religion. There is plenty of stock-breeding, cross-breeding and fancy-breeding in it. There are Six systems of philosophy, without taking into account Buddhism. Jainism and a lot of other 'isms.' There are *Saktas*, *Vaisnavas*, *Saivas* ; there are worshippers of *Agni*, *Varuna*, *Pabana* ; there are numerous *sampradayas* of Vedantists, Sankhyaists, Patanjalist &c. There is a regular forest of metaphysics and religions. We are a nation of metaphysicians. We can combine all the systems of philosophy and all the forms of religion and make a regular *lafra* of them. We can separate the ingredients at pleasure, and find which of them are the sweetest.

Neo-tantrism is the latest invention in the religious laboratory. It is the latest, but there is nothing to show that it is the last. Belur Math, Sat Sangha (Pabna asram), Santiniketan, Bharat Seva Sangha, Sankat Tran Samiti, and countless others exist with Pondicherry on the top of all. The time is rapidly coming when half the people of India will live in asrams, while the other half will be cultivators, factory labourers, beggars, burglars, borrowers and barrack soldiers. Broadly speaking God fearing men are exploited by God to feed God-loving men. If God failed to strike terror, His lovers would begin to starve.

LXIII.

METAPHYSICAL analysis is good for religion. It is constructive in moderate doses. It is injurious when the *optimum* limit is exceeded. It seems to me that you have exceeded that limit. To be plain, your temperament is more metaphysical than religious. Your aspiration is higher than your devotion. The desire to discover new truth is more predominant than that of applying it to practical life. Your imagination has a tendency to go out of control,—to rise superior to your vision. That you have nothing more to guide you than mere glimpses of supramental light is admitted ; but your discoveries sometimes seem to have been made in the full blaze of that light, For example, you say, "Sorrow and weakness are *vikaras* born of *ajnanam* or the

forgetfulness of the high and true self. These are not universal or eternal things, but local and temporary, local mainly of this earth, temporary in the brief period of the *Kali Yuga*."

What a vast vision is involved in this assertion ! It implies that the condition of the entire universe, including all the countless stars of unimaginable magnitude, is known to you. The universe is infinite. Your vision also is necessarily infinite. There are beings dwelling all over the universe, whose consciousness in regard to joys and sorrows is accurately known to you. You know their power of calmly bearing cold, one thousand degrees below the freezing point. You know their joys when the temperature rises to two thousand degrees centigrade, You know how they rapturously struggle for existence, how they joyously reproduce their species, how the Malthusian law has no bearing on their lives, how they love their women and make a perfect *Brindaban* of their respective stars. There is no bank failure in them. There is no League of Nations. There is no threat of Abyssinian war. All these things are known to you, whether they are happening in the constellation of Orion or in the planet Mars. The earth is a mere locality, and its population a mere village community in the universal empire.

You know not merely the universe as it exists today, but as it has existed in all the hoary past and as it will exist in the eternal future. The *kali yuga* is a temporary affair. The entire *kalpa* through which the universe is passing today and all the *kalpas* are known to you. The

kalpas are not limited to the earth. They extend all over the universe. Is there no *kali yuga* in the stars ? . What is the nature of that *yuga* in those distant corners of the universe ? Is the *kali yuga* of the earth an isolated fact ?

Can you tell us for how many years the *kali yuga* has existed on this earth ? In what *yuga* did the Vedic and Vedantic *rishis* dwell on this small speck of dust ? Where are they now ? Have they no weakness or sorrow now ? If they are living on this earth they have them no doubt. They were badly suffering when they lived in this world of ours, for the Vedanta is based upon the consciousness of universal suffering.

If the *kali yuga* is a temporary affair why take so much trouble for *yoga* ? Cannot mankind wait till the ephemeral business is over ? When the *satya yuga* comes the supermind will come down of itself. *Yogins* think in terms of eternity. You have yourself warned your sadhaks not to be in a hurry, because they have all eternity before them. Is the end of eternity the same as the end of this *kali yuga* ? If it is not, one can see no reason why men should waste their time in search of supramental light. Indeed when everything is predetermined why not drift along ? God is leading us towards final realization. The *Kalpa* is wheeling round under God's eternally fixed law. We have no merit or demerit. We boast of being cooperators of God. We ought neither hasten nor retard His work. God intends that mankind should be miserable through out the *kali yuga*. By hastening the advent of the *satya yuga* are we not trying to thwart God ?

A mixture of determinism and free-will is a logical absurdity. No solution has yet been found for the dilemma, and is not likely to be found ever in the future. We shall continue to act as if our will were free and to think as if everything were predestined. Everything becomes predestined after the event, not before it. God has created not a cosmic world, but a chaotic asylum. We vainly try to think that there is decency in things. We are blindfolded bullocks bound to the oil presser's machine. When supramental light comes we shall find that the world was not made for man, but that man was made for the world, and its *lila*. We are footballs made to be kicked from one end of the play-ground to the other, and back. Suppose the oil presser's bullock knew the purpose for which it was made to work, would it be happier in life? When ignorance is bliss it is folly to be wise. Supramental light will redouble our distress. Complete knowledge of the *lila* will spread gloom over us.

LXIV,

COMplete comprehension of the Deity is not possible either for man or superman. Any analysis of the nature of the Divine is apt to increase the obscurity or the mystery of His existence. Religion, no doubt, is ultimately concerned with metaphysics. At the same time metaphysical analysis carried too far has a debilitating, disintegrating influence upon religion.

Religion is founded upon faith, and faith implies ignorance. Metaphysics tries to remove the ignorance, and thereby to weaken faith. The attempt to verify faith is to throttle it to death. And "faith is better than indubitable knowledge". (**Riddle**)

Complete transparency of knowledge regarding the nature of the Deity would deprive us of the advantages of admiration, wonder and reverence. We do not worship the law of causation but the unknown spirit that subconsciously lies behind it. It is extremely doubtful whether supramental light or superconsciousness will help religion or hinder it. The supramentalization of our nature will bring us nearer to God and lessen the difference of power that separates us from Him. Complete supramentalization will help equalize our consciousness with that of God and eventually make us one with Him. That is the final realization. The sensation of individuality will be lost in God as well as in man. Self-consciousness will disappear from the universe. The *lila* will disappear so far as supramentalized men are concerned. It will not disappear completely, even when entire humanity has been supramentalized. Plants and animals and the earth will remain. The life plane and the mental plane will remain. Matter will continue to organize itself for evolution, and vital and mental beings will descend from their respective planes to evolve a new race of man. The process of evolution will continue, and new men will come into existence demanding supramentalization. When the earth consciousness is supramentalized will the race

of men disappear by immediate automatic supramentalization? what will become of the plants and animals when the Earth consciousness is supramentalized?

Yoga too will disappear. For, the aim of the *yoga* is to bring down the supermind to earth. The supramentalized men who will retain their individuality will have no function, for the ideal of life will already have been realized. A new ideal will have to be created. Men, rather supermen, living on the earth will directly shoot up to God and lose themselves in Him. This was precisely what the Vedantists wanted to have. Only they mistook overmental for supramental light, half-truths for whole truths.

The *lila* upon the earth will permanently disappear or lose its taste by the supramentalization of the earth consciousness. *Lila* becomes insipid by the knowledge of the future. *Lila* is life. Light destroys it. We falsely imagine life, light and love to be helpful to one another, to be blissful to man. If *lila* becomes tasteless life will cease to be worth living.

Are we sure that the immediate disappearance of the *lila* will accord with the will of God? Does God really repent, as the Vedantists think, having created the *lila*? The old tanarist had a different view. Is neo-tantrism going to agree with Vedantism on this fundamental issue?

Are we prepared to go against the will of God, like the *asuras* and the *daityas* and the devils ? Does religion mean rebellion against the Almighty ? Is this the ultimate aim of neo-tantrism ? What is to become of the dynamicity of God and man ?

Is the boasted retardation of *nirvana*, when the lamp is in full flame, a scheme for the dethronement of God ? Is personal consummation intended to reverse the relation between God and man ? From service holders we have become co-operators. Shall we one day be rivals and competitors of God ?

Are we going to repeat the most ancient Armageddon that led to the fall of man ? Is supramental light a grand new name for the apple whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our woes ? That it will bring the dullness of death is certain. We shall find time lank and long because everything will go right and nothing will go wrong, and we shall find life extremely flat because there will be nothing to grumble at. Probably woes will be absent because joys will be absent also. The two cannot live isolated from each other. *Ananda*, whatever holy men may pretend to think of it, is a dull stagnant form of pleasantness or cheerfulness. There is no enthusiasm in it. Its stimulating power is weak. It rather produces somnolence than intoxication. The sweetness of *ananda* leads to quiescence, not to practical activity. The spirit has no military activity—all its activity is diplomatic. Nationalism is becoming growingly spiritual in this sense.

LXV.

METAPHYSICS belongs to the overmental zone, the land of half-truths and half lights. It is tantalizing. The Vedantists have suffered chiefly by its treachery. It is full of pitfalls. But when a prophet has deeply entered into metaphysics he cannot easily withdraw from it. The only course open to him is either to give up his prophethood or to enter more deeply and more widely into metaphysics. He cannot leave his visions in a scrappy, fragmentary condition. The gaps must be filled in to press the whole into a compact and coherent system. This is the reason why I am appealing for a complete treatise on neo-tantrism.

LXVI.

YOGA does not terminate before final realization. The *yogin* goes on seeing new visions from step to step. His light increases as he approaches the ultimate truth, and intermediate truth becomes more and more useless in the growing light. They become half-truths, quarter-truths, two-anna truths, and are at length rejected as utterly false. By slow degrees we rise from falsehood to full truth ; and when full truth has been reached all intermediate truths are rejected. By a wise Divine decree visions have been made incommunicable, ineffable, inexpressible. They have no language.

There is however the danger of Visions dying with the seer himself if preaching is postponed till the *yogin* has reached the ultimate truth. The world receives no benefit from his discoveries. It is better to have to learn something than to learn nothing at all. We send our boys to inferior schools in the vicinity of our dwelling place instead of seeking for the best school not accessible to our means.

Hence *yogins* consider it their duty to communicate their visions with as much approximation to reality as practicable. The *yogin* who begins to communicate his visions too early may do harm instead of good. Common people have no means of knowing from what height the visions descend. They accept everything as true or reject it as false. Much depends upon the general reputation of the *yogin* as a respectable personality. The writings of a well known professor are considered to be more true than those of an obscure author.

The question is, at what stage in the progress of the *yoga* ought a *yogin* to begin to give the benefit of his visions to his neighbours ? Or in other words, when does a *yogin* become fit to be a prophet ?

It is probable Christ began to preach prematurely, and left his mission unfulfilled, promising a second advent. Why did he not continue to preach ? He evidently felt that his *yoga* was incomplete, and that he had better complete it in heaven before coming a second time to

redeem the world. He was a most conscientious *yogin*. The idea that his mission failed because the devil was too strong for him is a half-truth. The real truth is that he had not yet found the whole truth. The same view applies to other unsuccessful prophets, and all prophets so far have been unsuccessful. A single prophet if he knew the whole truth could put a stop to the growth of prophet-hood. There are so many prophets in the world now because they are all immature, and all are preaching before their time.

LXVII.

THE use of ambiguous words makes religion beautiful, but useless and untrue. We seek for a life after death. Why? Because the life before death is not merely disagreeable but incorrigibly so. The urge for a change, for better, for worse, is the cause of the search, and death alone can bring about this change. But what is death, pray? Death is cessation of life. If life ceases at death, how can it survive after it? Life means activity, and activity has many forms. Some of these forms cease at death, viz., the activity of growth and decay, and of reproduction and all ancillary activities. The activity of thought does not cease at death. Does not death cause a diminution of life? Certainly it does in some respects; but at the same time it brings an increment in other respects. It brings greater freedom of motion and of thought. After death we fly at once

from this to the other world. Where is the other world? We don't know where it is, but it must be somewhere in the skies, say some. No, no; the other world means only a different condition of this world, say others.

Then you mean to say that death can change the condition of this world? Yes, for the man who dies, and not for all mankind. After death the man lives in this world, but in slightly different environments. After a number of deaths the environments may change substantially. After countless deaths the environment becomes the very opposite of what it was at first. The old environment was a world of miscreants, the new is one of saints.

Have you ever seen a world of saints on this earth? No, I have not; but there is nothing impossible in it. A man may be a member of a gang of robbers in his original birth, and after a thousand rebirths he may become an inmate of a religious *asram*. Death is not the cause of the change. It is only a part of the process by which the change is brought about.

Please describe that process for my enlightenment. The truth is there are two distinct personalities in each man, namely, the self and the ego. By right of birth the self is the master and the ego is his servant. But in actual fact the soul is a mere puppet at the disposal of the ego.

What has caused this unnatural, undesirable state of things ? It is the stupidity of the soul that has caused it. He lived a life of degenerative ease, and became careless, lazy, negligent, drunken, supine, somnolent. He almost forgot his aristocratic birth and his rights. Meanwhile the ego raised himself in power and position, and made the soul a prisoner. When the latter became aware of his plight he tried to reassert himself, but did not know how to do it. He was tactless and ignorant. A *yogin* appeared to him and instructed him thus :— "What you must do is to resume the reins of power, to remember that you are *Iswara*, the King, the master and God Himself. You must on this understanding remember that you are all powerful. You have a mighty minister the Will. Support and direct the Will, and the Will will introduce order into the government and compel the officials each to do obediently and perfectly his own duty. Not of course all at once. It will take time. "It will take a number of rebirths." "The officials have become so much used to confused work and misgovernment that at first they will not be willing to work properly." "You can change your officials by dying." But death is not at your disposal. However, if you do not become forgetful again, you can at each rebirth have a tighter grip upon your new officials and servants, upon the new ego, the composite personality of the whole service, and thereby gradually improve your condition and position till you are in a position to leave them unawares and permanently return home in triumph and glory.

Does he not go home each time that death occurs ? Yes, he goes home, but he is not allowed to mix with the people there, who despise him as an unsuccessful soul bound to go again to the earth to qualify himself for celestial society. He is kept in a nursing home "Where he takes rest". But as soon as he has got rid of his fatigue, he is sent to the earth again to qualify himself for home-life (page 36, *Lights*).

Is he really compelled to come again or does he come of his own accord ? He is compelled by necessity to come. He feels the humiliation of being an outcast in the psychic society, and he resolves on qualifying himself for home life as quickly as possible. At each rebirth he becomes more resolute, and improves his chance of permanently living at home again as a free spirit. This happens by the process of evolution. But the soul can quicken the velocity of the evolution by performing *yoga*.

Can you tell me how the soul conquers the ego at last and leaves him to take care of himself, while he returns home in triumph ? Certainly I can tell you. The soul weakens the life and mind of the ego by slow poisoning, which is virtuous work for him, and one day he makes them unconscious by chloroform and takes french leave of body, life and mind in the shape of meditation, and eventually goes home in triumph and glory. The life and mind when they recover from the effect of the anaesthetic, finding that the soul, their true master has left them, go each in his own way to their respective homes in the vital plane and the mental plane. When people

come into the meditation room and find perfect calm pervading it they guess that the soul, life and mind have all gone away, leaving the body, mere dead matter in it. This kind of death is called *dehatyag*.

How does this kind of death differ from other kinds ? In other kinds of death the soul is compelled to leave the body. He does not leave it voluntarily. The life and the mind stick to him, particularly in cases of accidental death, and he has to struggle hard to shake them off. Sometimes *sraddha* becomes necessary to separate the life. Sometimes the mind positively refuses to leave the soul, and the soul has to take him to the nursing home in the psychic world, where he goes for rest like an Englishman who takes one or two native servants with him when he goes home to England. (page 36-37 *Lights*)

When this happens what becomes of the mind when the soul is reborn ? I am not sure for "**Lights on Yoga**" which is my authority on the subject, does not mention whether the soul has two minds to work for him or only one during the next seventy years of his new life or whether the two minds quarrel between them and cause still birth within the womb.

You mean to say that suicide is honourable and glorious, and accidental death is mean and infamous ? Certainly, I do mean it. Death in samadhi is possible only in supramental light, while accidental death takes

place generally in the dark. To die by one's own arms is necessarily glorious, more glorious than death by sniping, unprepared, unawares.

You mean to say that the soul that leaves the body secretly is given a triumphal reception at home? Yes, his departure is private and secret, but his arrival is public and triumphant. This time he does not go into a nursing home; he now stands before God. He does not stand before mean men; for he is equipped with supramental light.

Is he presented in court? What happens there? When presented in court God asks him, "do you wish to embrace me and be one with me? or, do you wish to have 'personal consummation' and glory in the shape of some grand work? He says in reply, "I prefer to have personal glory. I wish to be placed in charge of the work of supramentalization of the earth-consciousness, which is long overdue" God says, "Blessed art thou. Thou shalt inherit the earth," and create supermen.

Q. Have you ever seen a man die in *samadhi*?
 Answer. No, I have never had the pleasure of seeing any body die in *samadhi*. But I know *Ramkrishna* was about to die in *samadhi* one day.

Q. Under what circumstances? Answer. *Vivekananda* asked *Ramkrishna* if he had ever seen God. The latter said, yes. Vivek asked him if he could show him God. Certainly, answered *Ramkrishna*, and immediately sat

down in *yoga* for a long time. Then he cried out "Look, there is God standing in the form of Kartik," and immediately began to show signs that he was dying. For instance, saliva was gushing out of his mouth. To all appearance he was dying in *samadhi*, the most glorious form of death. If he had died then and there he would have died in the presence of God. He would have no rebirth again. But the ignorant impious people around him broke up his *samadhi* and brought him back to life.

Q. How did they do so ? Answer. They poured several pitchers of cold water on his head.

Q. Why did they prevent him from dying in *samadhi*, which, as you say, is the most glorious kind of death ? Answer. It is possible they were frightened by the manner of their master, and the terrible pain he seemed to be suffering from. Probably, they thought that if *Ramkrishna* died so prematurely they would have none left to teach them.

Q. Were they so selfish as that ? Answer. All religious men are selfish. It is selfishness that urges them to seek for individual salvation. Aurobindo is the first man to have knocked individual salvation on the head.

Q. Is it not possible that they were afraid of death and frightened by the prospect of death coming to one so dear to them ? Answer. It is quite probable.

Q. Then love is a bad thing ? Answer. Certainly it is. There is nothing worse than ignorant love. Loving god instead of fearing him has made spiritual life so ridiculous.

Q. But anything done in ignorance is excusable. Is it not? Answer. Not at all. Ignorance is the greatest sin. If *Ramkrishna* had died on that occasion he would have had a glorious final realization. His death which occurred not long after, and its circumstances, showed that he had subsequently fallen from his high consciousness, his supramental consciousness, into mental consciousness. For aught we know he has now been reborn to suffer the pangs of life again. He had a feeble body, life and mind for he had weakened them for spiritual benefits. He has lost all the benefit of his *yogic* efforts. He will have to weaken them again.

LXVIII. (a)

WHAT is the super-mind like? Answer. It is a knowing faculty, like the mind. The difference between the two lies (1) in that the super-mind can see many things which the mind cannot and (2) that it can see things rightly, whereas the mind sees things wrong, (3) that it can see reality or the thing in itself whereas the mind sees only form and colour.

Q. When the supermind descends on a man what becomes of his mind? Answer. It is turned out. It goes to the mind plane. If the mind remained there would ensue great confusion. Man would see things both right and wrong at the same time. He would

often make confusion between them. He would act viciously instead of virtuously. He might become an atheist in course of prayer, and scoff at God.

Q. You say the mind will go to the mind plane when the supermind descends. What will become of *buddhi*, *manas*, *chitta*, and *prana* ? Answer. There is no mention of these subordinate officials in the account of evolution from manhood to supermanhood. But I think *buddhi* will go to the *buddhi* plane ; *manas* to the *manas* plane ; *chitta* to the *chitta* plane and *prana* to the *prana* plane.

Q. Can the supermind know without the help of *buddhi*, *manas*, *chitta* and *prana* ? Answer. The supermind sees everything directly. It requires no intermediary, or "subordinate official".

Q. If *buddhi* goes to the *buddhi* plane how will the soul see things ? Answer. There will be no necessity for the soul to see anything. The supermind will see everything for the soul and guide it along the true path.

Q. Will the soul become a non-entity ? Answer. The soul will enjoy life like the lazy zemindar who depends on his naib. The transcendental God does nothing. The cosmic God brings the good things of the *lila* to Him, and He enjoys them. You must not make a confusion between enjoyment and activity. Paradise is a place for enjoyment, not for work. When the supermind descends the soul will enjoy incessantly. He will not eat in the sweat of his brow. That makes all

the difference between Paradise and earth. Adam never delved in Paradise, nor Eve span. They enjoyed themselves freely with nothing between them to stand in thier way. They were even naked.

Q. When the mind goes to the mind plane, what becomes of imagination, memory, reason, intellect, and mental will ? Answer. They go each to its own plane.

LXVIII. (b)

I am unable to understand how suicide can be better than death caused by an outside force. We hate the suicide who causes his own death by rope or razor. How can we admire the man who kills himself by spiritual meditation ?

I will tell you the difference between the two kinds of suicide, The ordinary suicide kills himself out of imbecility and cowardice. He is disgusted with life and is convinced that he is unable to improve it. He does not think of the future, He wants annihilation, not a new life. The *yogin* kills himself out of a lofty aspiration. Like the ordinary suicide he is, no doubt, disgusted with life, but he aspires to a superlatively higher life. He is inspired by "devine discontent."

Can't you give me something more convincing ? Yes, I can. The word suicide is misleading. The soul cannot commit suicide because the soul is immortal. What the soul really does is that it brings about a change of life,

exchanges an undesirable life for a better life. He is by his original covenant bound to do it. He fulfils that covenant by slaughtering the ego, who stands in his way. The true spiritual explanation is that he disperses a conspiracy or confederation of life, mind and matter. He compels the mind to go to the mental plane, and the life to the vital plane, leaving the matter of the body to be dissolved in a new form of consciousness.

LXIX.

ARE the soul and the ego really two individualities or one? The answer depends upon temperament. If you have the will to believe that they are one then they are really one. If the will to believe goes the other way they are really two. The two are united into one by the tie of command and obedience. In ordinary men it is the ego that commands. In *yogins* it is the soul that commands. Obedience may be half-hearted, and in that case there is partial duality. When the two are at logger heads the duality is complete. But the ego himself is a complete being, a collective personality. It is rather the name of a confederacy, constituted by a treaty between life, mind and matter. This treaty is the treaty of evolution.

The soul is like the Englishman in India. He is a nomad, Each time he squats in a place he calls it his own territory. The soul is the Aryan conqueror and the ego is an *asura*, turned into a Harijan in the heart of the *yogin*.

LXX.

I now know the soul and the ego. Which is the superior of the two ? **Answer.** The soul is many million miles above the ego. It is a spark from the Divine. The ego is a particle of dust picked out of the earth. The soul has descended from Heaven, otherwise called the spiritual world or the psychic world. The ego is an earth-worm. It belongs to the earth, the physical world, the world of matter, stinking foecal matter.

Is the ego identifiable with matter ? It is difficult to answer that question. It has evolved out of matter and in so far it is superior to matter. But matter has consciousness, though in a most rudimentary form. Consciousness comes from the psychic world. Hence the ego has something of the nature of spirit in it. It is, albeit, the lowest kind of spirit. But apart from the earth consciousness, the ego receives something from the vital and mental plane, in which consciousness exists in a large measure. However, these planes belong to the physical or supraphysical world, as contrasted with the spiritual world. The ego of man, the human ego, is born by the triangular interplay of earth, life and mind consciousness. With all these accessories the ego must be regarded as base-born. It cannot approach the soul either in purity or nobility. It is a mean treacherous personality

designed to be a slave at the service and disposal of the soul, designed by the supreme ruler of the universe, in which the earth is a mere speck of dust. The ego is a slave king.

Then, how is it that we often confuse between the ego and the soul? Has the ego risen or has the soul fallen in rank and power? Both processes have taken place. The soul was stupid and the ego, his slave, was clever. The soul forgot his birth-right, and associated with ego on equal terms, and eventually became a captive, and lost his supramental light, his Aladin's lamp, and lived in a dark cell.

When in this abject condition the soul became self-conscious, through the intermediations of *yogins*, human life assumed the form of a struggle between the two personalities. The soul recognized himself as God. He attained self-recognition. He went in his mind over the whole history of his existence, how he had issued directly out of the Divine, how he had adventurously chosen to play a predominant part in the grand *lila*, in its decay as well as in its growth, how he had failed to play efficiently, and had become a captive instead of a conqueror, and was now living a miserable life in a foreign country. He became home-sick. But how to go home? How to get out of the prison? He discovered that he had lost the light, the supramental light with which he had originally descended. He tried to recover it by meditation. He slowly and artfully weakened the ego, his life, mind and matter. He went

on hunger strike. He ate very little food, he ceased to think mentally, he gave up his appetites and desires, and all that strengthens the ego. He gave up his animal, economic, aesthetic and intellectual life. Thus supramental light came to him. Rather, the light that was within him, dimly burning almost in the dark, became brighter and brighter, till at length it was in full blaze, and in the course of meditation the soul left the body, life and mind without their being aware of the misfortune. The departure was private. But when he arrived at home, he received a grand ovation.

Neo-tantrism has committed the egregious blunder of supposing that man, who has no soul, because he is created by the interplay of matter, life and mind, acquires supramental or heavenly light by *yoga*, and becomes a superman by the spirit descending from the spiritual world. It has failed to see that the spirit was already within him, apart from the question of evolution, and that the supramental light had become dimmer and dimmer and had at length been blown out by the stupidity and forgetfulness of the spirit. The supramental light was rediscovered, not acquired; rekindled, not brought from outside by the power of exploitation.

LXXI.

YOU have frequently used the word 'consciousness.' What does it mean? **Answer.** 'Consciousness is all-pervasive in the universe. It is a sort of ether,

which is imponderable matter. Consciousness may be regarded as ponderable spirit. Spirit is thought. Consciousness is knowing, willing and feeling. It is rather the result of these processes. It is the power that knows, wills and feels. It is the person or thing that possesses this wonderful power. Consciousness pervades the earth. It pervades the skies. It prevades the stars. It pervades everything. It pervades life. It pervades mind. It pervades spirit. The universal spirit is universal consciousness. God is consciousness, the supreme consciousness. Spirit has consciousness. Mind has consciousness. Life has consciousness. The earth has consciousness.

Q. Is consciousness, like ether, the same thing throughout the universe? **Answer.** No. There are degrees of consciousness. There are varieties of consciousness. It is like smell. The same smell may be weak or strong. Of two smells one may be repulsive and the other attractive. There are different kinds of knowing, willing and feeling. One kind of knowing may bring the fragrance of truth, another the stench of falsehood. One kind of consciousness may raise us to heaven, another hurl us into hell. All our experience is consciousness. We are bundles of consciousnesses. Our consciousness differs from one another not only in degree and intensity, but also in kind or quality. Like heat, consciousness is distinguished by temperature as well as by caloric power. The caloric power may be low and the temperature high, and conversely.

There are varieties of consciousness. Man has three varieties : waking consciousness, dreaming consciousness, sleeping consciousness. Unconsciousness, subconsciousness, normal consciousness and super-consciousness are different forms or orders of consciousness. "The super-conscious seems to be inconscient because its state of consciousness is the reverse of ours." Consciousness is also divided into supramental, overmental and mental consciousness, also inframental. The consciousness of the vital plane is lower and thinner than that of the mental plane. The mental plane is the land of falsehood and incomplete truth. The overmental zone is the land of half-truths and half-lights. Supramental consciousness differs from mental consciousness in kind as well as in degree.

LXXII.

I now clearly understand the meaning of consciousness. It is something which bamboozles man, when he wishes to understand anything. It mystifies religion and confounds those who pursue it.

Q. Now, please, tell me the meaning of self-consciousness. **Answer.** When a man is conscious that he exists, he is said to be self-conscious.

Q. What is man ? **Answer.** He is the soul that is concealed within him. Sometimes, through oversight, philosophers mistake ego-consciousness for self-consciousness. The man is truly self-conscious who is conscious of both the ego and the soul within him.

Q. And remain unconscious himself? **Answer.** I understand what you mean. You think that three personalities together constitute the personality of man, viz., the soul, the ego and the man himself. It is possible to admit the truth of this affirmation. At the same time it is possible to deny the truth of it. They are three in one, and one in three. They are a triune existent. A unity in trinity. A trinity in unity. Dr. Tagore says that the soul and the ego are the two sides of a man. The soul lives on the right side, and the ego on the left. He has divided their functions. The ego is in charge of the animal and economic life. The soul is in charge of the aesthetic and intellectual life. That is an excellent arrangement. But what is the function of the man himself? **Answer.** That question cannot be easily answered. At least Dr. Tagore has not answered it. Man probably transcends himself after dividing the functions of life between the soul and the ego.

Now to return to self-consciousness. When a man is conscious that he exists as something apart from the world, from the environment, from the atmosphere, he is said to be self-conscious. For example, when a man is conscious that he exists apart from or in contrast with God he is self-conscious from the religious point of view. When a man is conscious that he exists apart from the society in which he lives, he is said to be socially self-conscious. When a man is conscious that he exists apart from mankind as a whole he is said to be humanly self-conscious.

What is meant when it is said that India has become self-conscious? **Answer.** Self-consciousness is meaningless unless implemented or supplemented by self-assertion. Mere existence is meaningless. A self-conscious man must know his powers, qualities, attributes, rights and responsibilities. He must assert his rights against God, society or humanity. The Indian people have begun to assert their rights against the British. She is therefore self-conscious. Self-consciousness asserted against God caused the fall of man. The self-consciousness of India, specially of Bengal, asserted against British domination has recently caused her fall to a deeper level, thanks to the non-co-operation movement. Religious men in the modern age manifest their self-consciousness against God by asserting that they are co-operators or collaborators of God and not his instruments, that they are potentially Gods in themselves. In some religions man asserts his self-consciousness against the ego. He means that the soul is the master and the ego is the slave. He weakens the ego and strengthens the soul by *yoga*. When a woman says to her husband, "I am your wife, not your servant," she has become self-conscious. The self-consciousness of entire womanhood is called Feminism. Factory labourers have become self-conscious now. They are called trades-unionists. What they assert is that they are co-operators and not servants of the capitalists.

Radhakrishnan says, "The assertion of the self as something other than the true reality of God is the fall or the original sin (*avidya*). The endeavour of religion is to get rid of the gulf between man and God and to

restore the lost sense of unity (by depriving ~~man~~ of his self-consciousness). It is a progressive attempt at self-realization, the lifting of the empirical ego to the transcendental plane". The Lord save us from confusion and have mercy upon us ! The ego is to rise to the transcendental plane, and self-consciousness is to be throttled out of existence !

Self-consciousness is a treacherous term. It caused our fall from heaven. It will enable us to rise to it again. It causes both depression and elevation. Self is meaningless as an absolute thing. God is not self-conscious in normal circumstances. Creation has made Him so. He has to assert His self-consciousness in opposition to all created objects, but He has recently told us not to assert our own self-consciousness in opposition to Him. In the original programme of the *lila* God encouraged us to assert our self-consciousness, for His object was to make the *lila* attractive. When He became tired of the *lila* He changed His mind, and told us to give up our self-consciousness. Originally, He made us one with the ego. But having ordered the *lila* to decay, He made us transfer our self-consciousness against the latter. He did this through prophets. All prophets so far have assumed that God is tired of the *lila*. They want us to merge our self-consciousness within that of God, so that we may fight the more recalcitrant elements in creation and kill them out. The ego is recalcitrant. But the ego played the most prominent part during the growth of the *lila*. God has forgotten his past services, and is now furious against the

ego because he refuses to co-operate with our true self in the work of demolition and destruction. He wants the world to fulfil itself by self-destruction in the same way as it fulfilled itself by self-aggrandisement during the growth of the *lila*. The entire mystery is concentrated in the question whether God really wants the *lila* to decay and to cease. It is possible all the prophets of the world have misread the purpose of God. It is quite probable that God still wants the *lila* to grow in grandeur, majesty and panoramic beauty. So long as this question is not answered no religion can be satisfactory. The real problem is one of self-consciousness. What ought to be the proper direction in which self-consciousness should move? Ought it to mobilize against God or against the ego and the world, against life, mind and matter?

LXXIII.

THERE is one other thing on which I should like to be enlightened. What is truth? **Answer.** That is precisely the question that Pilate asked two thousand years ago. He was in jest. I suppose you are in earnest. Really, do you wish to stay for an answer? But I am myself doubtful as to whether I can answer the question in earnest. Whoever, during the last ten thousand years and more, has tried to answer it in that way has failed. Three thousand years ago some Indian sages asked the question and failed to find

an answer—a correct answer. They discovered that God was truth, all created things were false. It did not occur to them that it was impossible for truth to create falsehood. Some of them thought that truth was created by God. But why did God create the universe? They were unanimously of opinion that God created the world for *lila*. They did not care to enquire if *lila* and truth could cohere together. They assumed it and spoiled the play. They thought that while it was God's will to enrich the *lila*, theirs ought to be to impoverish it. The *lila* was a struggle between man and God. The idea was absurd. But then, how did truth come into existence? The latest answer is that truth is not ready-made but made to order. As you ask the tailor to make a coat for you, you ask the philosopher to make a truth for your use and convenience. No body accepts a coat which does not fit him. Similarly, no body accepts a truth which does not suit his convenience. The process of acceptance is called in philosophy, the will-to-believe.

Besides, there are many kinds of truth as there are many kinds of coat. There are morning coat, evening coat, great coat, office coat, waist coat and a coat for general use. Similarly, there are truths for religion, for business, for school education, for science, for common sense, for savages, for civilized men, for diplomats and so on. Truth is thus a most variable and complicated thing.

Truth is necessary for action. It is inseparably related to consciousness. Isolate the consciousness, and

truth ceases to exist. There are many kinds of consciousness, and necessarily there are many kinds of truth. Among others there are earth consciousness, life consciousness, mind consciousness, overmind consciousness, super-mind consciousness, and supra-cosmic consciousness. Again, there are unconsciousness (which is a form of consciousness), sub-consciousness, normal consciousness and super-consciousness. We have also waking consciousness, dreaming consciousness and sleeping consciousness. Sleeping consciousness may be compared to unconsciousness.

The only truth which is most immune from aggressive opposition is the truth of self-existence. Des Cartes doubted his existence for a moment. He subdued his doubt by thinking that he was the thinker of his thought, which in this case was of the nature of doubt. Since then the metaphysical theory of 'becoming' and the scientific theory of 'evolution' have very much weakened the truth of self-existence. The Self exists only for a moment. At the next moment the old self is replaced by a new self. The old becomes or evolves into the new. The difference may be small, but it exists. Accumulated variations complete the difference by lapse of time, and the dog becomes a man, and man evolves into a superman. *Yoga* can victoriously quicken the pace of his becoming or evolution. By it a man can become a superman in five hours, in five centuries or in five million years.

Without it a man cannot become a superman before the end of eternity. Neo-tantrism makes no promise. But it is reassuring. Where *yoga* cannot

adequately quicken evolution, it quickens the ~~approach~~ of the end of eternity. Otherwise, its sadhaks might be discouraged. Most of them are hopeful that either *yoga* or eternity will come to its end in five years, or twenty five years—positively before their death. They are not prepared to risk another rebirth, because their master is uncertain whether after his death the *asram* will survive or collapse. The exact situation is this:—“All depends on the teacher and ends with his life time, unless there is another teacher who can take his place.” Without the *asram* the *yoga* is no good. I have no faith in truth, but if there is any truth any where it is in the prophecy that neo-tantrism will collapse with Sri Aurobindo.

Q. You are so harsh towards neo-tantrism because your consciousness is unfavourable to it. **Answer.** Certainly, it is so. The sadhaks, particularly the spare-time sadhaks think there is truth in neo-tantrism, because their consciousness, i. e., their taste and temperament are favourable to it. My taste and temperament run in the opposite direction.

Q. Do you really think there is no truth in neo-tantrism? **Answer.** Why I alone? The master himself admits there is no truth in it. Neo-tantrism is founded upon faith and ignorance, not on knowledge. “His true staff of walking is made more of a fire of faith than any ascertained and indubitable light of knowledge”. He does not know the truth yet. His consciousness is too

low for it. Truth is super-conscious to him now (that is above the line to which his consciousness can reach out). "It is only by rising toward a higher consciousness and therefore superconscious now to him that he can emerge from his inability and his ignorance." It is guessed that he will be able to see the truth when he has shaken himself free from his present consciousness, which is the normal mental consciousness of man, and replaced it by supramental consciousness. But a guess is not a truth. There is no truth in neo-tantrism at present; it is supposed that truth may come. "His full liberation and enlightenment will come, when he crosses the line (the line mentioned above). But how does he know that he will ever cross the line? He merely hopes to cross it. Is anything true merely because we hope for it? That is the kind of truth on which neo-tantrism is founded.

Q. Is not hope a sort of consciousness? Have you not said that truth depends upon consciousness, and that every truth has its own peculiar consciousness to recognize it? If consciousness is creative of truth, is not hope also creative of truth? **Answer.** I concede your point. But mind you, when the hope of the neotantrist becomes hopeless, the truth he seeks for will also become hopeless. Hope is ephemeral. It is a mere emotion. The truth on which neo-tantrism rests is also ephemeral. Does the neo-tantrist really depend upon this kind of truth? Ask him and satisfy yourself.

Q. The ordinary neo-tantrist may not have supramental consciousness. That does not show that the master

has not got it. Does it ? **Answer.** The master says there is no supramental light in the world yet. He intends to gain it by *yoga*. And he is the first pioneer in the adventure. Even when he achieves supramental light he is resolved to depend upon faith and not upon any indubitable knowledge. For him faith is stronger and more trustworthy than truth or knowledge.

Q. Suppose hope continues to the end of eternity ?
Answer. Then you can suppose that the truth of neo-tantrism will continue till the end of eternity. This hope is like the hope of the Life Insurance Companies, which are founded upon the hope that every new year will bring more business than the outgoing one. When the business of a company decreases successively for five years it is bound to go into liquidation. Every company depends upon the hope that the world's insurable income will go on increasing from year to year. This hope is associated with the other hope that the *lila* will continue to grow to the end of eternity. But the object of neo-tantrism as well as of all other religions is to cause the *lila* to decay from year to year. One who believes in the decay of the *lila* and insures his life is a personification of self-contradiction. One who believes that the *lila* will continue to grow till the end of eternity has no justification for adopting a religious attitude towards the world. He is an infidel at heart. He must have the faith that God is ever trying to lead us towards the final realization, towards the termination of the *lila*, or he had better not meddle with religion, and muddle it. The final realization is the goal of the *lila*. After the goal has been

reached, there is no play. A new play may be introduced, but the old one is gone. That is religion. That is metaphysics. That is the famous bridge associated with the fifth proposition of Euclid, Book 1. The course of the *lila* can be quickened, but it cannot be made to cross the bridge.

Q. Suppose the game is concluded long before the end of eternity. What then? **Answer.** The players will either embrace God and be one with Him or if they are adventurous enough they will be sent out to some stars where the game is not yet finished, and where people are still suffering from ignorance, broken legs, sprains, sorrows, miseries, famines, falsehoods and other misfortunes.

LXXIV.

WHAT is ultimate truth? **Answer.** In the order of evolution, which means progress from lower to higher, ultimate truth is the terminal point. Evolution begins at the bottom of the abyss of untruth. It is the ultimate level to which untruth can descend. Between truth and untruth there is a difference of degree only. There is no difference in kind. Truth and untruth are like heat and cold. Affirmation and negation are relative terms. Absolutely speaking, untruth is not the negation of truth but a lower kind of truth. The highest and

the lowest truths are the ultimate truths. For religion the lowest truth has no great importance. We live by anticipation, not by retrospection. We are above the lowest truth. Whether we ever lived at the lowest point does not give us much concern. If we ever lived in it we have transcended it. Our concern is with higher truths. We rise from higher to higher till we reach the highest. So far it has been the almost unanimous belief of men that we fell from the highest point of truth and that we are destined to rise back to it. Did we fall suddenly or slowly? Did we fall voluntarily or unawares or against our will? If we were thrown out by an outside power, were we consulted? Did we give our consent? Did we acquiesce in the fall immediately after we were pushed out of the bank? Did we try to resist the push? Did we try to rise as soon as we perceived that we had been pushed out? Did we accept the fall? Did we try to quicken the pace of fall? Did we feel joy in falling? Did we feel pain in falling? If we felt joy, did the joy gradually increase or decrease in the course of falling? When the fall came to an end, did we try to fall further down? What caused us to think of rising? How did we start the rising? Did we feel pleasure in rising? Did we anticipate the pleasure of rising? Was the fall continuous or was it interrupted? Did we sit down at any level on account of indecision as to whether it was better to rise or to fall? What gave us the power to rise? Did the same Being who pushed us down give this power? When was the power given, if it was given by Him? Was this power given at the start, i. e., before the fall?

Did this power come afterwards ? If so, when ? Do we rise from point to point ? Can we see all the levels above us ? Or, do we see only the next step ? Or do we see the ultimate point or level, though ignorant of the intermediate levels ? If there is pleasure, why do we stop at times ? Why do we not fly direct to the highest point ? Are there many ways of flying or only one ? Do we fly in aeroplanes or with the help of our wings ? That is, is the power of flying external or internal ? Or both ?

These are the questions for truth to answer. As truth varies from the highest to the lowest, the answer also varies in proportion. We act for the best according to our light at each moment, at each step, both in the fall and the rise. As we rise higher and higher, the light increases in brightness. As we fall from lower to lower, the light becomes dimmer and dimmer till at length perfect darkness or inconscience overtakes us.

Infinity has ends vertically as well as horizontally. The ultimate truth lies at the highest end. The ultimate untruth lies at the lowest end. The highest *ananda* is in the ultimate truth. The greatest suffering is in the ultimate untruth. It is however a question of maximum and minimum. The maximum *ananda* is in the ultimate truth. Untruth is minimum truth.

Q. Has anybody succeeded in answering these questions ? **Answer.** Every prophet has succeeded in answering these questions. Correct answers depend as much on

those who listen to them as on those who make them. The fact that every religion has subsisted for sometime, but not for all time, shows that the answers were correct only temporarily. Their correctness depended upon the state of consciousness of the audience. When the latter transcended that stage, the messages became untrue for them. Hence every religion has had growth and decay. Some have positively died. In India, for some years we have transcended the consciousness which made us accept the messages of the Vedanta and of the *Buddha*. We shall soon transcend the state of consciousness which accepts the truth of the neo-tantric messages, and then neo-tantrism will leave us never to rise again.

Q. What is the state of consciousness which most favours neo-tantrism ? **Answer**— It is an indefinite mixture of the eastern and the western consciousness,—a mixture of activity and meditation. We must meditate till we gain supramental light, and act when we have got it. This is not possible for all of us, and those for whom it is not possible must work during the day and meditate during the hours of leisure. Those who can afford to meditate only live in the asram and the rest are scattered over the country. Both of them form a single brotherhood at present. The brotherhood will terminate when the sadhaks of the asram find supramental light, for they will find it long before the other type of sadhaks. But the separation will not be long. The sadhaks of the asram will wait for their brethren before they begin to show their activity, for a large army of *yogins* will be required to bring down the supramental light. Individual action cannot bring it down. Collective

action will be necessary. "Our business is to bring down heaven on earth for ourselves and mankind". This will be a stupendous work which no individual personality can venture to attempt. The Vedantic principle was, "Each for himself, and the devil take the hindmost". Dr. M. N. Sarkar thinks the process will never terminate for want of mediums and centres of diffusion.

Q. Will this process not retard the final realization of the ultimate truth? **Answer.** Yes, it will retard it for the individual sadhaks who gain supramental light before the rest of mankind. But for mankind in their wholeness it will greatly quicken the pace of realization.

Q. Did God manifest Himself originally in separate individuals or in mankind as a collective whole, and then divide the latter into infinite individuals? **Answer.** He manifested Himself separately, for His desire was directly to turn the one into the many. But when the many are turned into the one, collective action is quicker than individual action. God is the ultimate collective personality of the living creation *plus* something which was withheld from manifestation. Realization by batches is more economical than individual salvation. But individual realization is more natural.

I think you now know the ultimate truth. Don't ask me how I got all this knowledge. I have got it earlier than you. That's all the difference between you and me, a difference of a few millennia. You are all destined to have this light one day, and then we

shall be one and the same. Don't envy my knowledge. I shall not jump into the final realization leaving you all behind.

Q. You have said much ; I have not understood it. Can't you be more explicit ? **Answer.** Truth is like happiness. As you seek for it, it flies away.

Q. Do you advise me to give up the quest after truth ? **Answer.** Yes, I would advise you to give up the quest after truth i. e., the ultimate truth. There are intermediate truths, viz., the truths of science to which no body can remain indifferent. You must know that two and two make four. You must know that two sides of a triangle are together longer than the third. You must know that if a dog is kept without food for a week it becomes perceptibly weak. You must know that fever can be cured by swallowing a drop of *aconite*. You must know that if you yield to the urge to make water without pulling open the buttons of your trousers you will feel uncomfortable. You must know that hunger calls for food, the erotic urge, for the opposite sex, and so on and so forth.

Q. What creates the urge to know the ultimate truth ? **Answer.** False ambition, spiritual snobbery, softness of the brain, bad imagination, divine eroticism, the bad habit of dreaming, unoccupied time or leisure, extreme poverty, illness, accidents, sudden disaster, bereavement, sorrow, disgust with life, defeatism, and idiocy supply the urge to know the ultimate truth. The urge

towards the ultimate kills the urge towards intermediate truth. The man who knows the latter least has the strongest craving for the former. Those who are ignorant of this world seek for knowledge of the other. Those who cannot exploit this world would try to exploit the other. Those who cannot cheat his fellowmen try to cheat God. Religion is exploitation of God and the other world. They want God to help them who cannot help themselves. Civilized men do not care for religion. They have power enough to manage their own affairs. Those who lack this power won't ask God to give them their daily bread and to protect them from sorrow and weakness.

LXXV.

Q. **W**HAT is the meaning of the fall? What is the quintessence of that meaning?

Answer. Assuming that God is the supreme consciousness and that all created or manifested beings have lower states of consciousness, the fall means a gradual course of degeneration or descent of the highest consciousness into the lowest. The highest consciousness was not lost in its wholeness. Half of this consciousness remained in tact. Otherwise, the whole cosmos might have become a perfect chaos. The other half was divided and distributed to the countless manifestations of the Divine, which appeared

in the form of individual spirits. These spirits, fresh from the Divine substance, all had the divine type of consciousness. But no one spirit possessed precisely the same consciousness as another. "They were different in power and nature from one another, and they came out in different conditions, at different times". This arrangement was necessary because God wanted not only multiplicity but variety also. It is not known with certitude if spirits are coming out of the Divine down to the present day. *Avatars* and prophets come now, but they come under different circumstances, in a different way.

Then the spirits began to descend and degenerate, descended in space and degenerated in power and nature. All of them did not descend. But it is not known if any of them were reabsorbed before degeneration set in. The process was something like decomposition. They degenerated from supra-mental to overmental plane, from overmental to normal mental, from mental to vital plane and at length reached the earth. The fall was finally arrested at this level. There was no lower plane in this world. There might be one or more lower planes in the other planets and stars. But we are not here concerned with them. God is infinite and His creations are infinite also.

Q. Who created these planes ? **Answer.** Probably God had already created them ; it is not impossible the spirits themselves created them, and only Space was

created beforehand personally by God, as well as Time. For Time and Space are the quintessence of the *lila* or creation and reabsorption.

In the earth-consciousness was thus involved supramental, over-mental, mental and vital consciousness. Even the uncorrupted, supreme, transcendental, divine consciousness was not wholly absent. The cosmic consciousness was also present. "Mind and life, supermind, *Sachchidananda* are in principle involved there in the earth-consciousness", but not in practical activity. In the vital consciousness mind, over-mind and supermind and *Sachchidananda* are involved. In the mental consciousness supermind (over-mind is a sort of hill on the mental plane) and *Sachchidananda* only were concerned. In the supramental level of consciousness only *Sachchidananda* is involved. "Once the nature is supramentalized we are beyond the ignorance (of the earth consciousness), and conversion of consciousness is no longer needed, though a further divine progression, even an infinite development is still possible". This information will be useful when I deal with evolution. It is here given only to show from what height we have fallen, how adventurous our primal protagonists were. They have not yet achieved their ultimate purpose, but consider how high they have reascended from the bottomless pit of earth-consciousness to overmental consciousness. Some of them even see glimpses descending from the luminous snpramental plane.

Q. Did all the spirits come down to the earth-consciousness ? **Answer.** No ; some of them remained in the

supramental plane, some on the mental, and some on the vital plane. They did not for the time being choose to descend lower ; or, it may be, they were not compelled or called upon to do so just yet. That many of them descended afterwards will be shown later on.

LXXVI.

Q. **YOU** have not told me clearly whether the spirits descended voluntarily or were pushed into the pit ? **Answer.** The scriptures are uncertain on this point. God has vouchsafed no message to enlighten us. But it seems they were pushed down with their own consent like the *suttees* of the Middle Ages. They were told that there was much woe, evil and suffering on the way and they accepted them openly and unequivocally. This does not imply that all of them accepted them with equal promptitude and enthusiasm and courage. It does not even imply that they retained their enthusiasm and fearlessness, when the woes and sorrows really came. However, the visions of the prophets are obscure on the point. The last message is characterised by diffidence. "May not the soul have accepted these things for a quicker evolution of life ?" This implies that the whole course of the degeneration and evolution was laid in general terms by God before the divided spirits—before the many—had come out of the one. The tone of the revelation is unprophet-like.

Q. Why did the souls accept evil and suffering, unrest and peacelessness when they were at liberty to live comfortably and in *ananda* at home ? **Answer.** You are

quite mistaken. They had no individual-existence in the Divine substance. They entered into the covenant after coming into such existence. The very fact that they had got their own individuality was enough to encourage them. "The call of the unknown, the joy of danger and difficulty and adventure, the will to attempt the impossible, to work out the incalculable, the will to create the new and the uncreated with one's own life and self as the material, the fascination of contradictories and their difficult harmonization—these things urged the spirits to accept the suffering and evil." These provided the temptation that led to the fall.

This explanation is given in human terms. "It is hard to answer to the human intelligence on its own level, for the consciousness to which the origin of the phenomenon of suffering and evil belongs, and to which it stands, as it were, automatically justified in a supra-intellectual knowledge, is a cosmic and not an individualized human intelligence." Neither the individual mind nor the species-mind, but the cosmic consciousness alone is able to understand it.

Q. Is your intelligence identified with the cosmic consciousness? **Answer.** It is a futile and fatuous question. It can do you no good, bring you no enlightenment, for your consciousness cannot in the present circumstances, transcend the mental, intellectual, human level. When you have got the cosmic, supramental consciousness there will remain no necessity for you to ask such a fruitless, meaningless, purposeless question. It is however

natural, though not rational, for you to ask it now, but it is unnatural for me to answer it. A divine decree has made it a sin to waste supramental knowledge upon intellectual understanding. For this reason supramental knowledge has no language. It is incommunicable. If it could be successfully communicated its distinctive value would be lost. *Yogins* have failed to find salvation by their eagerness to communicate their visions to men who had not acquired the requisite right and privilege. Only privileged individuals have the due receptivity and adequate retentivity.

LXXVII.

WHAT happened to the spirits and their consciousness when the fall was finally arrested on the earth level? The spirits had a very vague conception of the pit in which they were imprisoned. They had become inconscient, to speak metaphysically, or all but inconscient. They had become totally ignorant. Their will was a mere apology. Their feelings were blunted. This last was a redeeming feature. With their old sentiency they would have made the earth a most unlovable place. Their agony, anguish, excruciating pain, birth-pang, suffering, misery, woes and sorrows would have filled the skies with roaring cries and heart-rending groans. They had no memory, no imagination, no emotion, no sensibility, no intelligence, no lust, no anger, no avarice, no fear, no hope, no joy, no sorrow. They were mere existents or all but that. Thus passed millions of years over them.

But slowly and steadily all this time an urge towards a better state of things was becoming embryonate within them. It was developing slowly in the womb. At length, without caring for consequences they organized matter in various ways by way of trial-and-error. Some of these forms of organization attracted attention on the life-plane, where the beings had a higher consciousness. Some of these beings descended and were psycho-analytically fascinated. Eroticism became self-conscious and impregnated the chosen, organized matter with plant life.

It is a well-known fact that it requires two to make a bargain. It requires two lives to produce one. Whence came the two lives which produced plant life ? **Answer.** One was already in the earth-consciousness, the other descended from the life-plane. On the appearance of organized matter it descended from the life-plane, like a vulture which descends from the sky on the appearance of decomposing matter. The stronger life-consciousness descending from above held interplay with the weaker life-consciousness of the earth to produce a corresponding consciousness which manifested itself in plants, for it is said, "beings of a higher world can throw themselves on the lower to establish appropriate and corresponding forms which will connect them with the material domain and, as it were, reproduce or project their action here."

Q. Animal life is different from plant life. Did the two simultaneously appear on earth ? Or, did animal life appear subsequently ? Did animal life require inter-

play between plant life and a higher type of life descending from the life plane? The situation is obscure. Either **supposition** is possible. A prophet's chief concern is with *yoga* and not with evolution. So neo-tantric metaphysics has passed over this episode in the evolution rather perfunctorily.

It will be as well to reproduce here the pregnant passage that deals with the problem of evolution:— "The earth is a material field of evolution. Mind and life, supermind, *Sachchidananda* are in principle involved there in the earth-consciousness; but only matter is at first organized; then life descends from the life-plane and gives shape and organization and activity to the life-principle in matter, creates the plant and animal; then mind descends from the mind plane creating man. Now supermind is to descend so as to create a supramental race."

This supramental race is the supermen, to be evolved by the transformation of the human. The value of *yoga* lies in the fact that it can victoriously accelerate the pace of transformation. Supermanhood is the ideal of manhood. There are various degrees of supermanhood. The highest alone can see God and be one with him.

LXXIX.

THIS account of evolution, chronologically the latest, is given at page 8 of "**Lights on yoga**". A different account is given at page 96 of "**The Riddle of this**

world." "The inconscience from which the evolution starts is apparent only; for in it there is an involved consciousness with endless possibilities, a consciousness not limited but cosmic and infinite, a concealed and self-imprisoned divine, imprisoned in matter, but with every potentiality held in its secret depths. Out of this apparent inconscience each potentiality is revealed in its turn, first organized matter concealing the indwelling spirit, then life emerging in the plant and associated in the animal with a growing mind, then mind itself evolved and organized in man. This evolution, this spiritual progression, does it stop short here in the imperfect mental being called man?" No, the evolution will continue till the race of supermen or the supramental race appears. The jump from mental to spiritual progression means the final defeat of the ego and the victory of the spirit.

In this account there is no mention of life and mind descending from the vital and mental plane to play the most important part in the creation of plant, animal and man. The vital and mental planes seem to be redundant, a surplusage created by imagination and not discovered by supramental vision. That mental consciousness is a world of untruth is proved by this omission.

The Divine spirit was imprisoned in matter. Was it self-imprisoned? Then it was locked up from within. Are prisoners in an ordinary jail locked up in this way? Self-imprisonment is sheer metaphysical humbuggery. The spirit descended all the way from the psychic world no way changed in the course of the journey but only

feeling a little out of sorts. The change could not be represented as a chronic disease, beginning with a little fever or rise of temperature, developing liver and spleen enlargement, lungs and heart complications, threatening death, but eventually taking a turn for the better, leading to convalescence and ultimately to original health and vigour. The Divine is represented here as a malingering impostor. There was nobody enjoying the masquerade but the masquerader himself. Was God a lunatic or an idiot? He came out of Himself "urged by the joy of danger, the call of the unknown, the beauty of difficulty and danger, the will to attempt the impossible, to work out the incalculable, the will to create the new and the uncreated with one's own self and life as the material, the fascination of contradictories & c. (page 102, *Riddle*). A man in his normal condition of mind can hardly regard all this as a *lila*. It is sheer stupidity or charlatanry, whatever view supramental vision may take of it. It is at best mock fighting, mere parading; it is something like somnambulism. It is impossible to see any greatness in this account of the descent and ascent of the Divine. It is better to be an agnostic than to make a show of quixotic gnosticism, trying to explain every thing as due to ultimate mystery, irrationally identifying it with ultimate truth.

I claim no originality for these suggestions. They have been made by prophets and *rishis* before. The discoverer of the theory of evolution given above is fully aware of them. He emphatically repudiates

them. "I will not admit that the Brahman is a fool or a drunkard dreaming bad dreams, self-hypnotised into miserable illusions". (Page 84, *Yogic Sadhan*). But unfortunately his own account, though vitally different from the Vedanta, leaves on the normal mind the impression that God is what he arbitrarily, whimsically, autocratically denies Him to be. He ends by affirming that supramental light will cure every thing. He adds that faith and not light can cure anything. "His true staff of walking is made more of a fire of faith than any ascertained and indubitable light of knowledge" (page 108, *Riddle*). Salvation is faith-cure. It is not light cure. But supramental light is like X' Rays. It rediscovers the truth created by faith. Faith never goes wrong, if it is strong enough. Supramental light is a redundancy. But we cannot reach the truth without it. We do nothing. God does everything. God cannot do anything without our co-operation. We are God, and must unite mankind. God had good reason to be fascinated by contradictories. He created the contradictories. He has not yet harmonised them. He has left it to us to harmonise them. God is not a drunkard or a fool. But He has created drunkenness and foolery. The theory of evolution is the true harmonization of wisdom and folly. The author regrets that he has not been able to explain the situation clearly because supramental light cannot bear the darkness of human consciousness, and the darkness cannot bear the light.

"But the knowledge of reality is not expressible to the human mind ; its language of light is too undeciphera-

ble, the light itself too bright for a consciousness accustomed to the stress and obscurity of the cosmic riddle and entangled in it to follow the clue or to grasp its secret."

Why then try to explain truth by falsehood ? Can't you allow the truth to remain where it is ? Why drag it down and make a futile and false, bordering on fraudulence, attempt to express what by its nature cannot be expressed ? Why try to gratify the human consciousness by a false and deceitful effort ? The human consciousness is already filled with untruth. Why try to overburden it by adding falsehood to falsehood ? "Life is besieged by obscurity, falsehood and suffering." (page 37, *Riddle*). Why infuse into it more obscurity, more falsehood, more suffering ? Is it not better to deny the existence of God than to believe in the existence of a false God ? Is it not better not to know that God exists than to know that He exists as a masquerading knave ? Is it not better not to know a thing than to know it wrong ? Why try to hypnotise simpletons, to rouse false hopes in their minds, to lead them away from their accustomed ways of life, into the quagmire of unknown or unknowable truths ? Why deprive them of the one bird in the hand by falsely showing to them two birds in the bush ?

The true evolutionary urge is an urge towards a higher life, higher in degree but not different in kind. This urge does not create spiritual life ; it raises the standard of living on its own lines. The urge, which is said to lie at the root of evolution, is a force distorted and deflected out of its true course. The urge which

stimulates a poor man is an urge towards wealth. It is not an urge towards asceticism. It is not an urge towards final realization. The natural urge is towards limited unity,—unity in groups of men, not towards the unity of humanity. The true urge is sophisticated by 'creative evolution'.

LXXIX.

WHAT is the meaning of evolution ? **Answer.**

Evolution means an ascent from a lower to a higher state, chiefly effected by the potentiality of the organism assisted by environment. The intervention of a higher power turns it into creation. That is the difference between evolution and creation. Besides, the potentiality must be unknown to the evolving organism. The Divine spirit self-imprisoned in the earth-consciousness is an imposture. Its apparent inconscience is admittedly a humbug. Its super-conscience is kept concealed, but not lost. Any transformation effectuated by it is creation, and not evolution. Neo-tantric evolution may at best be called evolutionary creation, or creation in the order of evolution, or progressive creation. Everything is foreseen in creation. There is no foresight in evolution. God created man in His own image. His own image was known to Him and God reproduced that image consciously by a rearrangement of a quantity of dust taken out of the earth. We do not say God evolved man out of dust. God imparted his own

consciousness to the image by breathing into its nostrils. It is sheer misuse of language to call this evolution. Moses did not call it by that name. A number of successive acts of creation involving progress does not constitute evolution.

The mere existence of rudimentary consciousness in matter might not be objectionable. But when it is said that the rudimentariness of the consciousness is fictitious, the reality being the highest consciousness, the phenomenon assumes a new character.

The question of potentiality and actuality of the Divine consciousness in matter has been solved in Hindu philosophy. Even neo-tantrism insists that it is actual and not merely potential. The soul of man is God in actuality souls. Billions of atom have been lost. A comparatively few have reached manhood, or each man has billions of souls in him.

Yoga would have been futile if man were *Iswara* only potentially. "You are *Iswar*. You have forgotten your reality. Revive your *Iswarahood* by exercising your memory and imagination, and when you have realized your real position in the macrocosm, begin to rule the microcosm, by stimulating your will and gradually bringing under full control the anarchy brought about by subordinate officials." That is the starting point of neo-tantric *yoga*. To say that the Divine is potentially present in the earth-consciousness is a desecration, a blasphemy, a contradiction of the inner principles of neo-tantrism. The word 'evolution' has been

imported from the West to corrupt the religion of the East. At the same time the life-plane and the mind-plane seem to have been invented to show that the Western idea of evolution is false. The position of neo-tantrism is difficult. It is caught in the vice of Vedantism and Western philosophy. It aspires to conquer both, and is in danger of being pressed out of existence altogether. Vedantism is agnosticism. Western philosophy is mere intellectualism. Intuition is treacherous. The Vedantists depended upon intuition and were lost. Supramental light carries the panacea. But supramental light refuses to come, except in glimpses. The ambition of neo-tantrism is heroic, and its self-contradictions are palpable.

Vedantism is agnosticism. It is easy to call a man an agnostic. What are you? There are levels of agnosticism. You pretend perhaps to stand on a higher level of knowledge. But so long as the ultimate truth remains hidden, there is no escape from agnosticism. Mere hope that the truth may be revealed to a higher consciousness than what exists now, does not turn a man into a gnostic. You have admitted that ultimate truth is too high and vast to be envisaged. (*Ideal and Progress*). To that extent at least you are an agnostic. It is easy to denounce Vedantism as sheer agnosticism. But a man who lives in a glass-house had better refrain from throwing stones on other people's houses.

In the chapter "**The Overmental zone**" you have tried to discredit intuition, and thereby to show that Vedantism

and science are both false. Have you risen above the intuitive level ? I have already shown that your visions contradict one another. Half of them at least must be false.

LXXX.

Q. **T**HE first account of evolution gives to animals no mind. In the second account the animal has a growing mind. How are the two facts, if they are really facts, to be reconciled ? **Answer.** I am unable to reconcile them. Perhaps a third account will soon appear to reconcile them at the cost of clarity of thought. Supramental light, if it does nothing else, has the art of concealing truth in a dung-hill of mystery and obscurity.

Q. "Then Mind itself is evolved and organized in man". What is the meaning of this clause in the second account ? **Answer.** I am unable to answer this question. It seems to be a confusion. Did the mind of the animal disclose itself in man ? "And organized in man". The verb organized' is used intransitively, which is a solecism. Did the mind organize itself ? Was it disorganized in the animal ? What are the characteristics of this organization ? Everything is obscure in this account. The other account which is later than this is more intelligible, though destructive of the foundations of neo-tantrism. There life and mind descending from above create plant, animal and man. It is however too brief for our purpose.

It does not tell us whether mind had interplay with animal to create man, or there was a triangular interplay between mind, life and earth-consciousness. Perhaps the obscurity may be removed by expatiation. I am asking the author to write a treatise on the whole philosophy of neo-tantrism.

LXXXI.

MAN has no soul. He is a mental being. He is not yet a spiritual being. He expects to be one. He has probably within him the feeble spiritual consciousness, the consciousness of "supermind and *sachchidananda* involved in earth-consciousness." The supermind itself will descend to provide man with active, strong spiritual consciousness. Will it descend only to strengthen the spiritual element of the earth-consciousness? What will the supermind do after finishing that work? Every bit of consciousness has a concrete existence. What will the concrete supermind do after strengthening the spiritual element in the earth-consciousness? Will it coalesce with the latter?

Q. What is the soul of man? Is it the result of the above coalescence? Or, does it exist already and independently? The latter supposition agrees with the principles of the *yoga*. The former makes *yoga* futile and purposeless. There can be no *yoga* without *Isvara* dwelling in man as an actual, not a mere potential entity.

God living in matter, life or mind must be either actual or potential. He cannot be both. But neo-tantrism describes Him according to its own convenience, sometimes as potential and sometimes as actual.

LXXXII.

Q. **W**HAT is the difference between faith and doubt ?
 In the course of these disquisitions I have often wondered what they really are. Can you enlighten me a little ? **Answer.** Yes, I can enlighten you just a little. Very few men know the precise difference between faith and doubt. They both spring out of ignorance, and are therefore subtle. They are both eternal states of consciousness. They have existed from the beginning of consciousness and will exist till consciousness ceases to exist. Consciousness will not cease to exist until the final realization, the ultimate truth, is reached. These are some of the more important points of agreement between faith and doubt. Another point is that they are both subject to growth and decay. Where faith grows doubt decays. This is what takes place in the consciousness of a particular personality. When there are two individuals concerned faith may grow in one and decay in another and it has a general tendency to do so.

Faith and doubt are intimately associated with that peculiar thing which we call truth. All truths are manifestations of the ultimate truth. The difference between one truth and another disappears in the ultimate

truth, particularly when the two truths are antagonistic to each other. The truth of heat and the truth of cold are opposite, but their opposition is obliterated in the ultimate truth, which has no feeling at all. Knowledge and ignorance, good and evil, wealth and poverty, joy and sorrow, courage and cowardice, activity and laziness—all lose their opposition in the ultimate truth. They become one and the same. They cease to exist. They revel in the equality of non-existence.

All paths lead to Rome. All truths lead to the ultimate truth. When they arrive they are annihilated, extinguished, gone forever. Truth has three varieties ; complete truth, half-truth, and untruth. They are differentiated by differences of consciousness. No one consciousness agrees with another. The consciousness of the transcendental Divine differs from that of the cosmic Divine. The latter differs from that of the individual Divine. Every individual Divine has a consciousness peculiar to itself. God created the world for *lila*, the best possible *lila*. *Lila* is most attractive when there is infinite multiplicity and infinite variety. Multiplicity and variety grow by evolution, which is a sport of Time played on the breast of Space.

The consciousness of the spirit is different from that of mind ; the consciousness of mind differs from that of life ; and the consciousness of life differs from that of matter. There are three kinds of matter, *sthula*, *sukṣma* and *karana* and also *māhū karana* and *mahā māhū karana* (like *Mahamāhōpadhyaya*). The consciousness of these

kinds of matter differ from one another. Matter consists of atoms, and each atom has a consciousness of its own. Every life has a consciousness of its own, and so has every mind, and also every spirit. Every spirit had a peculiar consciousness at the very outset. Consciousness grows and decays with time and environment.

I think I have now said enough to indicate the infinitude of multiplicity and variety. Truth has infinite multiplicity and infinite variety. But all finally meet at the ultimate truth and are submerged, absorbed, dissolved or annihilated in it.

A complete truth is one which is believed by all conscious beings. A half-truth is believed by half of them. An untruth is one which is believed by no body. Incomplete truth is called half-truth. All truth is more or less plastic in metaphysics. Mathematical rigidity is injurious to metaphysical truth. It makes such truth ridiculous. Half-truth includes all truths whose value vary from one anna to fifteen anna truth. Broadly speaking, what is true for mental consciousness is half true for overmental and utterly false for supramental consciousness, and what is completely true for overmental consciousness is half true for supramental consciousness, and utterly false for Divine consciousness. For example, premature nirvana is true for overmental consciousness, half true for supramental consciousness and utterly false for Divine consciousness.

Truth becomes rarer and rarer as it ascends to higher and higher consciousness. The only truth which ultimately survives is the ultimate truth. Even God cannot doubt the truth of ultimate truth. No body can doubt that God is a thinking being, and thinking requires a thinker, and therefore, God cannot doubt that He exists.

Q. If faith is generated in ignorance, and is good for men, why seek for knowledge ? **Answer.** The law of evolution transforms ignorance into knowledge of the lowest kind, that is, raises the consciousness to a slightly higher level. This evolution lies at the root of all evils. It creates doubt, and doubt has an inner urge to commit suicide, that is, to remove itself. This desire to kill itself makes doubt seek for higher and higher knowledge, that is, higher and higher consciousness. As consciousness advances, the rudimentary doubt is replaced by a higher doubt and the latter by the next higher. This process goes on for ever until we reach Divine consciousness, and then both faith and doubt vanish together. We acquire final placidity of the soul, and all perturbation disappears. Truth and untruth, good and evil, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, strength and weakness, all become one. They lose their opposition, and are reconciled to each other. That state of consciousness is called bliss, beatitude *ananda*, *mahananda*, *mahamahananda*. Here the difference between Existence and non-Existence disappears.

All opposites are at heart one. Even faith and doubt are one. Also truth and untruth, gnosticism and agnosticism, monism and dualism, dualism and pluralism,

thing-in-itself and appearance, black and white, civilization and barbarism, knowledge and ignorance, wealth and poverty, heaven and earth, supramental consciousness and earth-consciousness, are all one and the same at core. Vedantism, Buddhism and neo-tantrism, are all one in their inmost depths, and their uttermost heights. The One ramifies itself into the Many, and the Many reduce and unite themselves into the One. There lies all the secret of metaphysics, God-vision, religious experience, intuition and supramental light. We cannot escape from this secret ; we cannot conquer it. We are bound by destiny. We are bound by fate. The attempt to escape and the effort to conquer are both half-truths of the overmental zone.

Q. What is the overmental zone ? **Answer.** It is the state of consciousness in which the mental activities of man over-flow their natural limits or embankments, and cause ruinous floods of imaginative exuberance.

LXXXIII.

HAS neo-tantrism a strong faith in the existence of supramental light ? **Answer,** No, its faith is weak. It is a new discovery. For five thousand years seers have been engaged in discovering the ultimate truth, and they have all failed, and all over the world. They had a strong faith in the existence of the ultimate truth, but they did not know what kind of thing it was. Anything that has a beginning has an end.

This was the basis of their faith. Creation assumes the existence of time as contrasted with eternity. Time is finite. Therefore, created things must come to an end. Will the created world come to its end all together or part by part? That question has not been solved as yet. Some metaphysicians think that the souls, the first created objects, will find *nirvana* or final realization or final destination or annihilation one by one. Others think the world in its wholeness will fulfil itself by self-destruction. Therefore, the world must be united first. There must be a united jump from the limitations of time into the abyss of eternity—a jump from the limitations of space into infinity, a jump from multiplicity into unity, from variety into uniformity. The last scene in the *lila* is the descent of the drop-scene.

Can the world be united at once? There is no religious experience, no vision, no intuition on this important point. Will the truth remain concealed for ever? That idea does not agree with the decency of things. God is neither "a fool nor a drunkard". Does he want to keep up the *lila* perpetually? He diminished Himself, He sacrificed Himself, He made a large retrenchment ~~but~~ of His infinitude, His eternity, His absoluteness by creating the world or the *lila*. Is the retrenchment going to be eternal? That is humanly impossible. All that we know of God is known by us humanly, mentally, intellectually, or at best intuitively. All these processes and instruments of knowledge have failed to give satisfaction. Therefore, it follows that there is a

higher light, a sharper instrument, to bring us knowledge, true knowledge, not false knowledge, such as, what the Vedantists and Buddhists, Christians and Mussalmans, Confucians and Taoists, to say nothing of the Barhaspatyas and atheists, have so far discovered. That higher light is supramental light.

LXXXIV.

Q. **I**S there any other reason why you consider that neo-tantric faith in supramental light is weak ?

Answer. There are several reasons. The founder of neo-tantrism has nowhere definitely affirmed that he has got supramental light. He is certain no body before him ever found this light. He cautiously evades personal reference. The utmost he knows is that glimpses of supramental light have existed till the time of his writing on the subject. But who got these glimpses ? Has he himself got them ? He is sure that it has not been brought down into the consciousness of the earth and fixed there. But the consciousness of supermind and *Sachchidananda* are involved or self-imprisoned in the earth-consciousness. (page 96, *Riddle*). "To bring down the supermind is the aim of our *yoga*". But why take the trouble of bringing it down when it is already there ? Again :— "Then supermind is bound to descend in the course of evolution ; but the descent will be very slow. *Yoga* can quicken the pace of the descent." Is it the will of God that the pace should be quickened ? It is assumed that God has invisibly given

permission to the neo-tantrists to quicken the pace of evolution. Why does not God quicken it Himself? He wants human cooperation. How do you know it? No answer has been given. How is it you know that *yoga* can quicken the pace of evolution, when the *yoga* has not yet been practised long enough? No answer has been given, except that faith favours the idea. Faith is blind; but it is the creator of truth. It works by trial and error.

LXXXV,

Q. **I**S there any other reason why you consider that faith in the existence of supramental light is still weak in the neo-tantrist? **Answer.** Diffidence, evasiveness, artfulness, desire to escape like a coward from difficult situations indicate it. All that is obscure in the scriptures of neo-tantrism is not due to the desire for brevity alone, but more often to the absence of adequate light. Supramental light increases in quantity and rises in quality with the progress of *yoga*. The acquisition of supramental light means a conversion from intellectual light, an exchange of one kind of light for another. It is easier for a prophet to deny that he has got perfection in supramental light than to admit that he has got none of it. A prophet is no prophet who has got no supernormal quality or is unable to convince his audience that he has got it. It might be dangerous to claim supernormal quality or to allow the audience to feel that he has not got it. Wisdom suggests the middle

course, of keeping the truth on the subject in obscurity. Jesus nowhere openly boasted that he was the son of God. He nowhere admitted that he was not. Within my own experience Ramkrishna, when an upcountry *sadhu* or *yogin* admired him in his presence as a Mahatma, did not deny it ; neither did he admit it. He listened and kept quiet. When people called him **Paramahansa** (God incarnate), he did not discourage or rebuke them. Mahomet alone among the prophets openly denied that he was anything but a man. He was glad however to be known as a chosen personality. It is not yet settled whether it is better to have a super-normal quality as a special gift of the Divine or to have it by acquisitive efforts of one's own.

All these men have been half successful. They have been neither victorious nor vanquished. Half success issues from half-truth. Complete success issues from complete truth. Failure issues from falsehood. There has been no prophet yet who has been unanimously accepted by mankind—the final judge of truth in the absence of God. The unity of mankind is necessitated by the aspiration to make it the absolute judge of truth, that is, to identify man with God. It is not enough to identify a few men with God, but all men, the whole of humanity. This is the real value of the ideal of the unity of the human race. This is the final realization of religion, the ultimate truth of metaphysics and ethics, the perfection of evolution, the fulfilment, the extinction of the purposiveness of human life.

Some measure of imposture is necessary for successful prophethood. Jesus Christ practised it particularly when he cried, "*Eli, Eli, lama sabuch thani*," that is to say, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" As if the crucifixion were not a prearranged phenomenon. Even the cry was a predetermined concoction. It was not an immediate outburst of emotion.

LXXXVI.

IS there any other reason for the opinion that neo-tantric faith in supramental light is weak?

Answer. Faith is founded on ignorance. Supramental light is intended to make faith impossible. That is its chief function. But the founder of neo-tantrism after communicating to his *sadhaks* all the messages he had supramentally received warned them that supramental light was a matter of secondary importance, and that faith was all in all, not merely in the beginning, but down to the end of the *yoga*. "His true staff of walking is made more of a fire of faith than any ascertained and indubitable light of (supramental) knowledge." This is the real truth. The effort to impress upon the *sadhaks* the absolute importance of supramental light is a sophistication, a fiction, a concoction in proportion to its elaboration. Faith is the *alpha* and *omega* of neo-tantrism, as of all other religions. And the Vedantists had faith? If they had, what did it matter that they did not discover supramental light? All that has been

said in disparagement of Vedantism ultimately reduces itself to the simple proposition that the Vedantists had no faith in the decency of God or in the truth of His existence.

Faith displays itself most when it is weakest. Strong faith is sternly silent. It never loses its serenity of temperament. Strong faith comes without coercion or persuasion. It thrives most in the dark. It cannot thrive in light. If supramental light ever came down to the earth, faith would hide itself. Already scientific light, which is much inferior to supramental light, has reduced it to ashes. One who boasts simultaneously of faith and supramental light possesses neither of them in any appreciable quantity. It seems it is more difficult to have faith than to have supramental light, though we have to have it if we wish to supramentalize our nature. It is curious the supramentalization of nature means among other things, the complete destruction of intellectual truth. Faith belongs to the normal mind, not to the overmind or supermind. May confusion never be more confounded !

LXXXVII.

Q. **H**AVE you any other reason ? **Answer.** The acquisition of supramental light is a process of 'conversion', as from Hinduism to Christianity. The mind is converted into the supermind—the mind which is concerned with falsehood and incomplete and

half-truths into the supermind which is the seat of pure truth. Mind and supermind cannot live together. The mind must be wholly relinquished before the supermind appears. The gradual ingress of supermentality in proportion to the egress of mentality is an absurd state of existence. It means a mixture of truth and falsehood, a mixture of the Sun moving round the Earth and the Earth moving round the Sun, a disintegration of the law of causality and the free-will of the Divine, a combination of Heaven, Earth and Hell, of the law of heredity and that of rebirth, a confusion of natural right and vested interest, a doubt whether Heaven helps the weak and poor or those who help themselves; those who are rejected in the struggle for existence or those who survive.

Those who have read **"The Riddle of this world"** are convinced that mental or intellectual light has been ominously strengthened by supramental light in neo-tantrism. No lawyer in the world could argue like the founder of neo-tantrism. He convinces by intellectual argument when supramental light fails, and he does it more artfully and successfully than one who has nothing but intellectual light to guide him. Dr. M. N. Sarcar thinks that "the mind of man is elastic enough to accommodate both kinds of light."

Some Harijan Hindus who had been converted to Christianity were one evening engaged in the worship of *Kali*, sacrificing numberless goats and a buffalo. Some high-caste Hindus twitted them. They said in reply, "If

conversion to Christianity means abrogation of the worship of *Kali*, they would prefer to perform *suddhi*." It was mysterious to them that the two religions could not stand together. Freedom of supramental thought is not consistent with the freedom of intellectual thought.

LXXXVIII.

Q. **I**S there any other reason? **Answer.** Yes. The supermind, like the prophet, is expected to have a certain majesty, a commanding tone, a supernormal dignity, a despotic directness, in his utterances and an authoritative loftiness in his deliverances. There is no lawyer-like argumentativeness, but a courtly firmness in his speech. Compare the utterances of the founder of neo-tantrism with those of the founder of Christianity. Compare also the Sermon on the Mount with the parables in the Gospels. Neo-tantric utterances are like the parables. They never approach the Divine dignity of the Sermon. Rhetoric is out of place in the supermind, even in half a supermind. God is neither a metaphysician nor a rhetorician. He does not speak by parables and metaphors. Metaphorisation is admittedly a weakness of intellectualism. To say that Divine messages cannot be expressed except by metaphors looks like a blasphemy. To say that metaphors are not necessary for the prophet or the teacher but for the

audience is tantamount to the admission that the teachings are inexcusably premature. The principle of *Adhikar*, the right to understand, is inviolable. This principle has now been misunderstood and corrupted by pseudo-prophets. Statements like the following are woefully lamentable, uncomely, self-stultifying :— (1) "It is hard to answer to the human intelligence on its own level, for the consciousness to which the origin of this phenomenon belongs and to which it stands, as it were, automatically justified in a supra-intellectual knowledge is a cosmic and not an individualized human intelligence". (page 101, *The Riddle*). (2) "That knowledge is not expressible to the human mind ; its language of light is too undecipherable, the light itself too bright for a consciousness accustomed to the stress and obscurity of the cosmic riddle and entangled in it to follow the clue or to grasp its secret." (page 105, *The Riddle*). It would have been more graceful if the writer had said,—"I have no clear idea on the subject and I decline to make any statement". The attempt to explain what is inexplicable is a quixotic adventure.

On the other hand, for a prophet to use such expressions as, "May it not be", "Why should we assume ?", "It is not impossible", is to betray unconsciously a weakness most unprophet-like in its tone and character. They constitute a derogatory, self disparaging favour-seeking self-introduction. If the supermind is compelled by its nature to use such phrases truly, we have need of seeking for enlightenment elsewhere.

The principle of *adhikar* applies as much to the teacher as to the pupil. To say that the pupil has no right to understand, is from the pupil's end equivalent to affirming that the teacher has no right or ability to explain. The teacher must examine the would-be pupil before admitting him. To admit an unqualified pupil is a sin.

At the present time would-be pupils are examined physiognomically. It is an examination of the reflexion of mind upon matter. Such examination is bound to be defective. It is equivalent to judging reality by appearance. It is judging the thing itself by its form and colour. Here appearance is supposed to be the infallible index of reality. As a matter of fact it obliterates the difference between reality and appearance. Reality is supposed to dwell in appearance, not appearance in reality. The nominal becomes the real and the real becomes the nominal.

In most cases the appearance itself is not the original but a photographic copy, now so copiously used in judging the qualities of a bride, moral, intellectual and physical. The photograph is a representation at a particular moment of something which is "becoming." It cannot represent the reality within, which is a "being."

Does the spirit cast its reflexion on the body? At best the ego may do so, for it evolves out of matter. If the spirit could be known by the form and colour of

the body, supramental light would be a costly luxury. Who ever buys electric light when the kerosine *dhibri* gives adequate light ?

At all events the method of judging is scientific, not *yogic*. "The scientists' knowledge begins from the bottom and moves towards the top. *Yogic* knowledge begins from the top and moves to the bottom". (page 32, *Yogic Sadhan*). The first moves from appearance to reality, the second from reality to appearance.

The neo-tantric teacher unjustifiably blames his pupils for their inadequacy instead of accepting the responsibility on his own shoulders. The danger of premature preaching is here flagrant.

LXXXIX.

Q. **H**AVE you any other reason to offer ? **Answer.**

Yes. Supramental light is the same as the superman. The superman is a man from whom four attributes have been completely eliminated. The life of a man is divisible into four primary parts viz., (1) the animal life, (2) the economic life, (3) the aesthetic life and (4) the intellectual life. When a man has exchanged all these four kinds of life for the glories of the spiritual life he becomes a superman (last sentence in '*Ideal and Progress*,). Has the founder of neo-tantrism relinquished these forms of life ? He still has the animal life because he requires nourishment, however small in quantity. That he has economic life is obvious from the

fact that he claims the asram to be his private property. That he has the aesthetic life is conspicuously felt in the elegance of style displayed throughout his works. He cares for beauty. I might almost say he cares for beauty more than he cares for reality. Lastly, there remains the intellectual life. That life is growing, not decaying, with resplendent growth of supramental light, in the founder.

Q. I am fully convinced— I don't want any more reason. Why did you not give this reason first ? When Nelson visited a small British colony he expected from the staff a salute of seventeen guns. But his expectation was not fulfilled. However, he landed in anger and asked the Governor why he had failed to fire the salute according to law. The Governor replied that he had seventeen reasons for not firing the salute. "Out with them !" demanded Nelson. The Governor said his first reason was that there was no gun-powder in stock. Nelson said, "Keep the other sixteen reasons with yourself ; I have no need of them ; the one you have given is enough."

XC. (a)

Q. **W**HAT is supramental light ? **Answer.** To know the meaning of supramental light one must know what light means. Light may be divided into internal and external. External light comprises sun-light, moon-light,

star-light, phosphorent light, light of many things at high temperature, that is, in the incandescent state, such as candle light, castor oil, mustard oil, cocoanut oil, mineral oil, coal, carbon, magnesium &c. There is also the light of electricity. Internal light comprises mental light, overmental light, supramental light, cosmic light, supra-cosmic light. There possibly exist higher types of light. It is not impossible that those unknown lights transcend the light of God as we know Him, as we suppose, think, imagine, understand and believe him to be.

Q. What is the necessity of having two series of light instead of one ? **Answer.** External light brings knowledge ; internal light receives it, stores it up for future use.

Q. Whence does external light bring knowledge ? **Answer.** From outside. Scientists and men of common sense, investigators of the *sthula* aspect of the universe gather knowledge in this way.

Yogins gather knowledge in the opposite way. They first know a thing in the *karana*, then transfer it to the *suksma* and finally verify their knowledge by transporting it to the *sthula*.

The scientist begins at the *sthula* and carries his knowledge through *suksma* to *karana*. The scientist begins by using external light, which works on the senses. The external light comes into contact with mental light and produces intellectual knowledge. By refining the mental light he can carry his knowledge into the overmental region

of his mind, where it meets with intuitive light, which is a higher kind of knowledge. The scientist cannot carry his knowledge into the supermind, for the supermind is unknown to him.

Knowledge and light mean the same thing metaphorically, if not actually. Knowledge is consciousness. There are various types of consciousness. Mental consciousness, overmental, supramental, vital and material consciousness. Also psychic consciousness, spiritual consciousness, Divine consciousness, cosmic consciousness, supra-cosmic consciousness, consciousness of the individualized spirit in its normal condition, consciousness of the latter in its condition of imprisonment or ignorance or inconscience, or fragmented conscience.

XC. (b)

Q. **T**HE *yogin's* method of acquiring knowledge seems to me to be simpler and easier than that of the scientist. The object lies within himself and he sees it directly and immediately, in the twinkle of the internal eye. What is your opinion ? **Answer.** It would have been easier except for one difficulty. The whole universe exists within the soul of the *yogin*, but it exists as an indivisible whole. The parts are not distinguishable. If a *yogin* wants to see a part of the universe, that is a particular object, he is confounded. The whole universe lies in miniature within him, and

the parts are so inseparable and indistinguishable, being pressed into a minute space, that even a microscope of million-fold magnifying power could not distinguish them. So it is necessary to see objects in their natural condition and dimensions in the spatial physical universe. Contact with the object is thus necessary for the *yogin* as much as for the scientist. It is said that contact is not necessary for acquiring the knowledge, but for verifying its truth. It is added that verification is not meant to test his truth, but undertaken in order to see how the truth he knows from the *karana* is being worked out in the *sthula*. (page 38, *Yogic Sadhan*). A more stupid waste of time is inconceivable. The truth is that, with all the *Yogin's* pretensions, he is never certain of the truth until he has seen the object in the ordinary human way, that is, by means of his senses, by "contact," by "looking at the object." The *yogin* verifies his knowledge with the help of the senses ; the scientist begins it with their help. The *yogin* sees the reality, the thing-in-itself first and makes the real still more real by his knowledge of appearance. The scientist moves from appearance to reality.

Q. Is verification absolutely necessary ? **Answer.** Do you suppose the *yogin* to be a fool or a drunkard ? Why does he undertake the verification ? It is said Newton discovered the law of gravity by the yogic method of acquiring knowledge before he saw the apple fall in the garden. He did not care for the verification, but the latter obtruded itself upon him. Admitted,

But what is the result ? Einstein has shown that Newton had failed to reach the truth, in the same way as Newton had found that Kepler had failed before him, and Kepler had discovered the untruth of the Copernican cycles and epicycles.

XCI.

Q. **Y**OUR explanation of light and knowledge is very illuminating. But what is supramental light ? Is it internal light or external light ? **Answer.** It is difficult to answer this question. When young David asked Peggotty, "What is marriage ?" Peggotty answered, "I have never been married and don't expect to be, that is all I know about marriage". It will be seen that David had an intuitive knowledge of marriage acquired by the *yogic* method. He had never seen people marrying each other. What is worse he had never seen his father, and had never seen any two married persons behaving towards each other in a way peculiar to a nuptial couple. But certainly he had a vague knowledge of marriage, instinctively, intuitively, supramentally or mentally, acquired or inherited. That knowledge which lay half-concealed in the unconscious region of his mind, that is, in the *mahakarana*, gradually manifested itself, by way of verification, in the *Sthula*, when about twenty years later he proposed to Dora, the beautiful daughter of Mr. Spenlow. There are various explanations of this phenomenon. Some say the unconscious gradually developed

into the sub-conscious, and from the sub-conscious it further developed into the conscious. It probably developed into the super-conscious when Dora died.

Now, supramental light brings superconscious knowledge? Perhaps, I should say that it receives, registers and stores up that knowledge. That depends upon whether supramental light is external light or internal light. The founder of neo-tantrism, so far as can be gathered from his writings, is uncertain about this point of supreme importance. He cares more for beauty of language than for truth. "There have been glimpses of supramental light till now." "It has not been brought down into the consciousness of the earth and fixed there." "To so bring it down is the aim of our *yoga*." "Our business is to bring down heaven (supramental light) on earth for ourselves and mankind, to eliminate sorrow and weakness from the little corner of existence and time", to destroy the *lila* in short.

Here we have one of the primary functions of supramental light; it eliminates sorrow and weakness.

Supramental light converts the human race into the race of superman, and in the process eliminates animal life, economic life, aesthetic life and intellectual life from the earth-consciousness in general, and from human consciousness in particular.

Q. What is earth-consciousness? **Answer.** It is the lowest consciousness of God descending in the course of creation. It is nearly the same as inertness or the

absence of consciousness, the total negation of it. A little above it is vital consciousness. Higher up there is mental consciousness. These consciousnesses are different only in degree and intensity. Their nature or character is the same. Mind does not feel pleasure, where life feels pain ; but the same cause may produce greater pain in a man than in a beast. All men have not precisely the same consciousness, intellectual, emotional or volitional. Intellectual consciousness varies most from individual to individual. Emotional consciousness varies very little from man to man. An associated group of men have the same or nearly the same consciousness, which chiefly manifests itself as national consciousness.

Supramental consciousness is not a mere higher human consciousness. It is different in kind. The supermind has no emotion. That may be regarded as a defect, a retrenchment from the mental consciousness. But the cognitive consciousness in the supermind is nearly the opposite of that of mental consciousness. The supermind sees reality. The human mind sees appearances. Truth is the monopoly of the supermind. Falsehood is the general characteristic of the mind. The mind may suffer from disease or injuries or poison or chloroform and lose its strength, but the supermind is above these defects. Three pin-point drops of *Iodine* introduced into the cortex of the brain can nonentitise the mind, the mental consciousness. But the supermind or supramental consciousness cannot be similarly affected. But the latter is open to development, and possibly also to degeneration. The causes are unknown. But it

is possible intensity of *yogic* meditation causes development, and slackness causes degeneration. A *yogin* may rise or fall. He may approach God or move away from Him.

XCII.

Q. **W**HAT is the Divine consciousness ? Is it mental or supramental ? **Answer.** But the Divine is divided into three parts. The transcendental Divine has supracosmic consciousness. The cosmic Divine has cosmic consciousness. The individual Divine has supramental consciousness when it is free. It has only mental consciousness when it is locked up in man. It has an inferior consciousness when it is imprisoned in animals and plants. Its consciousness is weaker still when chained by matter in the form of earth-consciousness.

Q. What is the origin of consciousness ? **Answer.** God is the supreme consciousness. All other consciousnesses emanate from Him directly or indirectly. Supramental consciousness emanated direct from Him when by *agamic fission* He threw out spiritual sparks out of the pyrotechnique supra-cosmic light, when, in the language of religion, He manifested Himself as many out of the Absolute One. These sparks are known as individual spirits. Divine consciousness degenerated into supramental consciousness. The consciousness was gra-

duated, and different spirits had different degrees and probably also different types of supramental consciousness, for they were different in power and nature.

Q. You have said the emotional element is absent in the supramental consciousness. Did the individual spirits ask God why He had brought them into existence? Probably they did ask; and God answered that He wanted to make a grand, all-comprehensive *lila*, out of the mixture of love and hate in millions of forms. The individual spirits accepted the proposal. They mysteriously began to love and hate one another. The six *ripus* took possession of them. This was the beginning of the fall. They descended downward continuously for millions of miles and years until they were obstructed by the mental plane. Here they spent millions of years, during which their supramental consciousness was converted or fully corrupted into mental consciousness, but supramental consciousness was not entirely lost. With this new acquisition or corruption half the spirits descended further down and struck on the vital plane. Here again a new conversion took place. Their mental consciousness was converted into vital consciousness, but not all of it. Something of mental consciousness remained with a slight infusion of supramental consciousness. When the Earth was colonized, the spirits further degenerated into earth-consciousness with slight infusions of vital, mental, supramental and also a few drops of *sachchidananda* or Divine consciousness, which was never wholly lost. Even in this abyss, "all was not lost". The supracosmic unconquerable will remained. This will lay at the root

of the evolution which began later on. The will took a turn. The downward urge was not only arrested, but converted itself into an upward urge. Bergson did not know anything of the history of the downward urge. This has now been supplied from the East, from India, the primeval home of metaphysics. It is our glory that the man who discovered this history was reborn in Bengal. We never pretend to know anything of the original birth of any person. The souls were not born, but were mere manifestations of the Divine emotion which urged Divine will to manifest itself in a multiplicity of wills. We are all wills clothed in emotional and cognitive consciousness. Supramental consciousness is a coat of glowing silk. Mental consciousness is a black shirt.

Q. What caused the will to change its direction ?

Answer. The will changed its direction to demonstrate its freedom. It may change its direction even now and at any time. It is indeterminate. The will manifests itself chiefly in degeneration and evolution alternating with each other.

Q. Is there any evidence that the will ever changed its direction during the degeneration journey ? **Answer.** Supramental light is not strong enough to visualize the details of the history of the individual spirits. Probably the minority often tried to fly back home, but were prevented by the majority. The courageous ones had a firm will. The cowards wavered. Eventually, it seems the cowards occupied the eastern and the heroes colonized the western half, of this world. This is what is meant.

by affirming that the spirits did not come all with the same power and nature. God created an infirm will and cowardice for our quick salvation in *nirvana*. Instead of being grateful to the discriminative Divine, the neo-tantrists are refusing *nirvana* like the tantrists and *Vaisnavas* of old. But the longevity of the *Vaisnava* appeared to be despicable ; hence the neo-tantrists prefer the immortality of the old tantrists, for this is supported by the lessons of practical life in the West. Love and hate are both emotions and therefore ought to be eschewed. But if our choice is to be limited to the one or the other, we must prefer hate, for the West is shining by it. No nation has grown and shone by love ; and what is true of the nation must be also true of the individual. It must be true of humanity, the unity of which is the ideal of neo-tantrism. That ideal is not to be gained by love but by renunciation of it, not by unity of humanity but by nationatism and racial love and ethnological brotherhood and competition.

XCIII.

Q. **W**HAT is the difference between supramentalism and *Buddhism* ? **Answer.** That is a very pertinent question. The two words are synonymous. They mean the same thing on the surface. Enlightenment is the name for both. Enlightenment derives from light. Light is the means of salvation for both. But the light which brings salvation to the *Buddhist* and the *Vedantist*

is antagonistic to the light sought by the neo-tantrist. The *Buddhist* wants superior light to lead him to *nirvana*. The neo-tantrists want it for virtual immortality.

Q. I can now more clearly see what you have all along meant by distinguishing one kind of light from another. Somehow I had the idea that lights may differ in degree and intensity, but not in nature and character. I am now able to distinguish between supramental light and mental light ; the second fills our lives with falsehood and the first gives us truth. Of the two superior kinds of light, neo-tantric and *Buddhistic*, which is the better ?

Answer. That depends upon the liver, I mean upon the temperament and taste of the man who wishes to have the one or the other. Philosophically speaking, the question is decided by the 'will-to-believe'. What is true for one man is not necessarily true for another. What is true for a man now need not be true for him to-morrow or next year. Truth is a man-made thing. It is not ready made, but made to order. An order means will. Truth changes with every change of will. Will depends upon temperament and taste. Truth is the most rickety thing in the world. It depends upon light also ; and light manifests itself sometimes as a cognitive force and sometimes as an emotional force. People often erroneously believe that internal light or consciousness is only a cognitive force. Its emotional urge is stronger than its cognitive urge. This truth is now dawning upon the West, and is gradually being imported into

the East. Dr. Tagore thinks that the light of knowledge finds a more reliable dwelling place in emotion and imagination than in the intuition. The entire inner structure of man is suffused with light, good or bad, trustworthy or untrustworthy. Supramental light is stationed in that structure, though the exact position is not known. It may be called speculative light or metaphysical or supraphysical light, with a strong affinity to imaginative light or consciousness with its varieties of unconscious, subconscious, consciousness and supra-consciousness. It has taken, in the metaphysical world, great efforts of genius to analyse consciousness into its variously ramifying aspects. No philosopher can approach the founder of neo-tantrism as an explorer of light and consciousness. The results of his speculative explorations will be admired longer than neo-tantrism itself. The entire universe is spectroscopically luminous with light and consciousness, so as to present a panoramic show, the finest manifestation of the *lila*, in which neo-tantrism itself is the most fascinating, specially for youthful immature minds ; for supramental light comes more easily to the unripe than to the ripe mind, in which effervescence or fermentation has ceased. It is readily receptive, responsive, volatile and versatile and produces nothing but pure water when distilled.

Q. How is it that neo-tantrism is so popular ?

Answer. That is a perplexing question. Can any body tell me why Darwin is so popular ? Darwin's popularity has vexed G. B. S. most surprisingly. Having pointed out

that Darwin's method of evolution presupposes starvation and murder of all living beings not lucky enough to survive in the struggle for hogwash, G. B. S. asks "How was it that the explorer who opened up this gulf of despair, far from being stoned or crucified as the destroyer of the honour of the race and the purpose of the world was hailed as Deliverer, Savior, Prophet, Redeemer, Enlightener, Rescuer, Hope-Giver and Epoch-Maker?" The explorer of supramental light has destroyed the honour of the race, by regarding human life as worthy of nothing better than complete destruction and replacement by the race of supermen. He has not only destroyed the purpose of the world by calling God a desireless consciousness but has introduced the purpose, unworthy of any adult human individual, of *lila*, which turns the universe into a lunatic asylum by its play of love and hate, generosity and covetousness, placidity and anger, truth and delusion, wealth and poverty, surfeit and hunger, friendship and murder, upward and downward urge, altruism and egoism, cordiality and jealousy, war and peace, sorrows and joys. Yet young men move towards him as a deliverer, a savior, a redeemer and above all an enlightener. The world is mysterious. Without mystery the world would have been a place in which life would be unbearable. But here too, supramental light is intended to destroy all mystery and make everything luminously visible. If all the truths of life were known, how many of us would find life worth living? We live by delusion and doubt, not by the power of indubitable knowledge of truth. We live by blind faith not by an open-eyed belief. Life would lose all its charm if it were lived in supramental light. That would

first deprive us of our animal life, then of our economic life, our social life, our political life, our national life, our married life, our life of youth and old age, our life of love and hate, our aesthetic life, our poetic life, our philosophic life, our food-seeking life, our sex-seeking life, our tool-making life, our fashionable life and lastly our intellectual life. Only spiritual life will remain, and no body knows what that means. Spiritual life transcends the *lila* of life. It is dull, monotonous though dynamic. With spiritual life you make yourself almost a rival of God. But you can exercise no rivalry with Him. You can only cooperate with Him. Your free will must be completely surrendered to Him. You become a great servant, an angelic slave. Your immortality soon becomes a nuisance. A man who spontaneously does good and no wrong is an automaton. No intelligent man can see any good in supramental life, that is, life induced by supramental light, which kills freedom and makes immortal slaves of supermen and turns humanity into Harijans.

XCIV.

Q I understand supramental light is the normal light of the spiritual world. All spirits possess this light and live by it, when they are free from body, mind and life. Every one of us has a spirit within him. Every spirit has supramental light within him. The supramental light has lost its brightness by the stupidity and indolence of the spirit, euphemistically called self-forgetfulness or inattention.

• If these bad qualities are inseparable from supramental light, wherein lies its excellence? While yet our spirits were free, that is to say, before the starting of the *lila*, they had supramental light; when by *yoga* the spirit becomes free, it will again have supramental light in full blaze. • By the touch of the *lila* it will again lose its supramental light. What has happened once is bound to happen again. As soon as the emancipated spirit begins his grand work of bringing down supramental light to earth-consciousness, his own light will begin to grow dim, and eventually cease to give any light at all. He is not an inexperienced fresher. His first experiment has convinced him that a spirit cannot retain his supramental light, while he is engaged in infusing it in the mental plane, the vital plane and the material plane. He may probably think of passing next time, by a flanking movement, by the mental plane and the vital plane, where most of his light was shed in the first experiment, leaving him only a small quantity for the earth. But he cannot forget that contact with lower planes is detrimental to supramental light.

• The truth is, so long as the *lila* subsists, the spirit is never safe with his supramental light. The *lila* is the cause of the fall of the Divine. It is the cause of the fall of the individual spirit. He may be safe only if he keeps aloof from the *lila*. But the "desire of personal, individual, divine consummation", wont allow him to remain aloof. This, I think, is enough to knock the bottom out of neotantism. Is not the work of bringing down supramental light a process of *lila*? If it is not, then the theory of *lila*

is a fiction. The first experiment was part of the *lila*. How can the second experiment escape the *lila*? The *lila* is the result of God's will. So long as the *lila* subsists supramental light is impossible anywhere except in the spiritual world. The earth is not part of the spiritual world. It is also said even when the earth-consciousness is supramentalized it will not be converted into the spiritual world. It will not be a duplicate copy or *replica* of that world.

Neo-tantrism has much to explain yet. It may be popular among young men, but unless its truth is made clear it cannot subsist long. Youth does not continue till death, unless death is forced upon it by a suicidal urge.

Q. How long will the *lila* continue? **Answer.** The *lila* will continue until the world fulfils itself by self-destruction, that is, until God becomes One again by extinguishing His Manyness. The *lila* commences as soon as the One becomes Many. It will end only when the Many become One.

The spirit world itself is part of the *lila*. Supramental light is part of the *lila*. God's own light is supra-cosmic. Whatever belongs to *lila* is ephemeral, untrue, unreal. Supramentalism, neo-tantrism, is yet in embryo. Its development will require thousands of years. But most of our *sadhaks* believe that long before their death, for they are still young, supramental light will be brought down to earth-consciousness by their master, who is now pretty old and is not beyond the reach of death, with their

co-operation. They think of the glory that awaits them. They are now enjoying life as it is. They will be enjoying, before their death, life as it ought to be. At any rate in the next rebirth they will find the world enjoying uproarious joys and surprises like Mr. Knickerbocker after his experience in the sleepy hollow. During his sleeping consciousness loyal America was metamorphosed into Independent America.

XCV.

Q. **S**UPERMIND sends glimpses now and then. "But it has not been brought down into the consciousness of the earth and fixed there. To so bring it down is the aim of our *yoga*." "Our business is to bring down heaven on earth for ourselves and mankind." "Only when that (supermind) can be brought down is a divine transformation possible in the earth-consciousness." These are expressions of a noble sentiment. Is supermind the same as supramental light? Is supramental light the same as supramental consciousness? Is supramental consciousness the same thing as heaven? How can supramental light be brought down and fixed in the earth-consciousness? Supposing that it is fixed permanently in the consciousness of the earth, will the earth still require the help of the vital beings from the life-plane to produce plants and animals? Or, of mental beings from the mental plane to produce men? Will not this mean the eternal abolition of the human race?

Will it not mean the final extinction of the neo-tantric *yoga* ? Is the *yoga* an ephemeral state of consciousness invented to meet a temporary emergency in the lives of the souls ? Why do not the souls now existing in the psychic world, fresh, free and pure, bring down supramental light on earth ? No doubt, they have no personal experience of the earth, but can they not acquire this experience while yet living in the psychic world ? "The soul comes into birth for experience, for growth, for evolution till it can bring the Divine into matter." Is it to be understood that so far no soul has returned to the psychic world with complete experience of the earth ? Does a complete experience mean that Virgil should be a poet in Rome, a philosopher in India, a warrior in France, a statesman in America, a parliamentary leader in England, a thief in Australia, a scientist in Germany, a malariologist in Madras, a swindler in Scotland, a financier in Palestine, an idolator in Bengal and an atheist in Russia ? Is it necessary that Virgil should be reborn a countless number of times to acquire complete experience of earth-consciousness. Has he any chance whatever to return to the psychic world, with such experience as will enable him to bring down supramental light on this wretched earth ? Have the founder of neo-tantrism and his disciples got all the experience necessary for the work of bringing down supramental light ? Among other things, have they all got experience of jail-life ? If they have not, is not their *yoga* premature ? Can they find supramental light in their inexperienced life ? Would it not be better for them to complete their experience before they earnestly devote

themselves to *yoga* ? Can *yoga* give any experience of jail-life ? If so, can it give experience of cheating, misappropriation, criminal breach of trust, murder, grievous hurt, terrorism, adultery, rape, sedition, defamation and other kinds of damnable experience ? The soul must create within him "a multiple personality, a many-sided character or a many-sided, sometimes what looks like a universal capacity." I do not deny that "the psychic, when it departs from the body, shedding even the mental and the vital on its way to its resting place, carries with it only the heart of its experiences, not the physical events." Whatever fraction of the total experience is eventually carried to the psychic world, it must be admitted that the experience must be gained in its wholeness, and afterwards winnowed to collect the grain.

Answer. These questions have struck me also. I find the publications of neo-tantrism too brief, perfunctory and incomplete to be of much use. I am writing this long letter as an appeal to the founder of the religion to give us a systematic treatise ; and when he has done so you will have no difficulty in answering the questions which seem so puzzling to you now. You can wait a couple of years and light is sure to come to you.

XCVI.

Q. I am quite prepared to wait a couple of years for a complete account. But there are one or two points in which I should like to have an immediate answer.

Answer. What are they ?

Q. Supposing supramental consciousness is brought down, how will it be fixed on earth ? Will death disappear from the earth ? If so, will there be free communication between the psychic world and the earth ? Will the man, rather the superman, achieve final realization on this earth or will he have to go to the psychic world for the purpose ?

Answer. It seems to me that supramental light will be brought in the same way as Bhagirath brought down the Ganges, which promised to save not merely his own ancestors but the whole of mankind ; for it is said, "Our business is to bring it down not only for ourselves but for all mankind". The Ganges, I particularly mean the Bhagirathi, is showing signs of being silted up. That is an unfortunate fact. But there is no cloud without a silver lining. We want a substitute for the Ganges. It is probable supramental light is that substitute.

Q. Cannot supramental light be silted up ? **Answer.** Quite possibly. When it is silted up we shall have to seek for a third panacea. Religion would disappear from the world if the stream of truth were not silted up. God invents new methods of salvation from *yuga* to *yuga* and personally descends to implement them. This is part of the *lila*. Divine dynamicity would rust in inertia if a permanently fixed method were introduced. The *lila* would become dull, disgusting, monotonous and uninteresting, without changeful methodology.

Q. What do you think of the analogy of the kingdom of Heaven brought down and fixed on earth ? **Answer.** The analogy is ominous for supramentalization. Christ

never brought down the promised kingdom. It is amazing an Indian Prophet went to Palestine in quest of an analogy, when an excellent one was available at home. The Ganges was brought down from heaven and fixed on earth. Though it has been now silted up, it has done its part well for several thousand years, saving us in the physical as well as in the psychical world. The villages on the bank of the Ganges constituted for a long time a sort of paradise. Mr. Wilcox came to investigate the problem from the paradise point of view and bestowed on Bhagirath the title of "great Engineer". I should regard him as an economico-spiritual prophet, whose aim was to bring down both apple and *ananda* in superabundance.

XCVII.

Q. **H**OW will the supermind enter into the minds of men dislodging the existing mind? There are two ways of working out the problem. We can excavate an inlet as well as an outlet for the mind. The turbid, filthy water of the lake will pass out while pure and fresh and sparkling water from the high glacier of the psychic world will flow into it. It may also conceivably happen that a man will completely drain out his filthy mind and wait for a timely shower from above. Most of the *sadhaks* are more concerned with the drainage than with the irrigation. In plain language they are becoming idiots in the hope of being transformed into wise men hereafter. There is drought in the

psychic world at present. M. N. Sircar has discovered a psychological method of transformation. The method would have been excellent if it were not foggy and self-contradictory. I have discussed it in the preface.

XCVIII.

FALSEHOOD is bad. Pure truth is unsatisfactory. A mixture of truth and falsehood is the best as well as the worst. From the *lila* point of view it is the best. From the *nirvana* point of view it is the worst. However, it has a redeeming feature. It supplies the urge towards *nirvana* more effectively than pure truth or pure falsehood. Pure truth would make the *lila* dull and disgusting. Pure falsehood might invest the *lila* with occasional radiant flashes, but it is destructive in the end. The lightning is beautiful, but it grows into the thunder. A mixture of truth and falsehood keeps up the *lila* and brings hope of final realization. The mixture may vary from time to time, but it is always a mixture. It is not pure truth or pure falsehood that it behoves us to seek. Our duty is to seek for the best mixture. Supramental light is no panacea. It is worst when it induces us to reject *nirvana* for personal consummation and good work and heavenly slavery.

Supramental light is sought for the mitigation of sorrow and weakness. "Our business is to eliminate sorrow and weakness from the little corners of existence." But in

mitigating the sorrows and weaknesses it is bound to eliminate the joys and strength of life. Supramental light kills the *lila*. And the neo-tantrists want both *lila* and supramental light. That is the fundamental defect of neo-tantrism. The neo-tantrist wishes to stand on the fence between *nirvana* and *lila*, so that he may jump on either side. He is unaware that he can jump only once. But he erroneously thinks that if he chooses the *lila*, he can at pleasure jump into the *nirvana* at any time, but if he chooses *nirvana* he cannot jump into the *lila* at will. Go into the *lila* and sooner or later, supramental light will leave you. You cannot have the cake and eat it at the same time.

XCIX.

Q. **W**HAT is the great and glorious work you allude to that induces the neo-tantrist to prefer the *lila* to the *nirvana*? **Answer.** That glorious work is the unification of the human race.

Q. Is the unity of the human race a possible phenomenon? **Answer.** It is an impossible enterprise; and this is admitted by the founder himself. He wants to unite the human race by extinguishing it. Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar thinks half of humanity will always remain unsupramentalized humans to the end of time.

Q. How? **Answer.** Many men have tried to unite the human race and have failed. Dr. Tagore tried it several years ago. He wanted to build up an ideal man

out of the paradoxes of human life. Some friends suggested to him the necessity of getting clear of the paradoxes by mutilations and accretions. But he strongly repudiated the idea. He said simple stressing and curbing of the faculties would be enough. He would curb, but never carve the faculties and passions. Dr. Rādhakrishnan would integrate them producing coherence within and harmony without, by subduing the warring elements. But he does not mention how the subdual is to be effectuated. He would not retrench their strength lest the thrills of life were extinguished. He wants to realize the full meaning of life, to be throbbing with wild hopes and to be dazzled by new vistas and to be devastated by the grandeur of poetry and fiction, and to have unforgettable visions of men at grips with fate burnt into his heart ; he wants in short to be shaken, exhausted, cleansed and confounded by contradictions, incompatibilities, paradoxes and amazing bewilderment. He wants to have the *lila* in superabundance commingled with heavenly *ananda*. He wants to enjoy both the worlds simultaneously and exquisitely.

The absurdities of these positions filled the mind of the founder of neo-tantrism with the gloom of despondence. He at length made up his mind. The human race must be broken, stock, lock and barrel, and reduced to ashes, and extinguished. He would first eliminate the animal life of man and then his economic life, and next his aesthetic life and lastly his intellectual life. Indeed he would eliminate everything except the spirit and have a pure bath of spiritual

glories. He would replace the human race by the race of superman. The human race is incorrigibly bad.. God wants a superior race. The race of supermen is further from the human race than the latter is from the arboreal race, the race of monkeys, the highest among animals. Dr. Sarcar will keep all these races and add the superman race to them to lord it over them and to exploit them.

This is not a new experiment. The world is what it is because of the free elimination and substitution of races. The experiment has been most successful in the modern age. The original races of the different parts of the world have been transformed into aboriginal and sometimes even completely annihilated, their places being refilled by importations of superior races. America furnishes the most resplendent illustration of this mode of developing the created world. It remained for Sri Aurobindo to annihilate the entire human race. Man trying to extinguish humanity is the loftiest and finest point in the progress of the *lila*. In India our ancestors did not extinguish the aborigines. *Sakti* wanted to extinguish them, but Siva stood in the way.

C.

Q. **D**O you approve of the scheme ? **Answer.** Not at all. I do not approve of any of the three schemes mentioned above. They are all wrong, all confused. In appearance universal brotherhood of man

is an offshoot from the universal fatherhood of God, but in reality the two things are mutually antagonistic. Whenever men have united, God has disappeared. Look at the great nations. They are great brotherhoods, but where is their father? He has fled away in fear. On the other hand, where the fatherhood of God carries strong faith, men kill one another, saying "my father cannot be your father, you are so mean." Miss Murdstone warned Clara not to compare her child to her brother's.

To unite humanity is to drive God out of existence. United humanity would create a rival force to God's power. It may look like a co-operative force, but at heart it is a rebel. Power and slavery are mutually incompatible. Dr. Tagore has truly said, "God is now a beggar at our door asking for offerings", because we have power enough to live in defiance of Him. We had better be kept where we are. Suppose united humanity said, "We want to continue the play for ever", when God told them to stop the play. Could God compel them to obey Him? If you wish to worship God, have nothing to do with human unity. Human unity has a tendency to destroy religion. The master has therefore warned all *Sadhas* that "The asram is not a religious association". He wants them to perform *yoga* for human unity, not for the worship of God. He admits theists and atheists alike. "Those who are here come from all religions and some are of no religion." The Vedantic *rishis* were mischievous people, who tried to lead people astray. The Buddhists were worse. They were individualists, "each for himself and the devil take the hindmost". The neo-tantrist is a humanist, but only in

name. He has no idea of collective life. He wants every man to assert his own personality, to prevent its dissolution as long as possible, and to work for personal consumption and glory. Neo-tantrism is a coagulated clot of confusion throughout. The *lila* is a confusion. The evolution is a confusion. The unity of humanity is a confusion. Supramental light is a confusion. Confusion pervades from end to end, from beginning to end. There is however no great difference between my view and neo-tantrist view regarding the condition of the world, its philosophy and religion. The neo-tantrists heartily believe that these were in utter confusion until the advent of neo-tantrism, while my view is that it is still in confusion—in as great confusion as existed ever before. All the prophets of the world have so far deceived mankind. Their teachings are deliberate impostures or unconscious untruths. The Vedantists and the Buddhists have been the worst among them. The idea of premature *nirvana* has captivated the mind of India, with a dreadful fascination and deprived her of the enjoyments of life in both the worlds. It has given us a deep-rooted preference for indolence and indifference which are socially, politically and spiritually ruinous. It has transformed us into a subject race, a race of slaves, exploited by our own brethren of the West, and fit for nothing but hog-wash, meditation and contemplative malevolence. The name of our God is *darpahari*. Jahveh said, "but vengeance is mine". The Koran said, "Kill the *caffirs* and heaven is yours with her *houris*". Our own *Tantra* said, "Worship *Sakti* and She will exterminate the *asuras* that harass you." Are the

asuras really the passions that worry us daily? "The number of reeking skulls that form the garland of *Sakti* disproves it. I thought neo-tantrism would smash all these barbarous sentiments and bring peace and joy to the heart of man. Has it done so? It has shot down Vedantism and Buddhism, but it has not given us a religion free from confusion. If possible, it has made confusion worse confounded.

CI.

CONCLUSION. And now my task is done. It has been an enormous task lasting for fully a year. Unaccustomed to spiritual experiences and *yogic* meditation it has cost me much hard labour to understand the abstruse metaphysics of "**The Riddle of this world.**" I understand the little, but pregnant, volume was distributed for review to Newspaper Editors inured to gloat over pig-wash and not pearls, and to youthful philosophers accustomed to cramming for examination. I have read the reviews made by some of the papers, and have wondered what ever induced the generous publishers to waste so many copies of a most valuable book, valuable not for the general reader, but for real students. They admired or quoted some insignificant sentences, taken at random either with pride or shame, and thereby depreciated the book by their very appreciation. Some young philosophers were overjoyed to notice, with a sort of national pride, some sort of correspondence

between Bergson's theory of Evolution and the neo-tantric variation. One of them pointed out that dynamicity added to final realization produced an insoluble paradox. He did not see that the ideal was not the final realization but far below it, viz, the unity of humanity. Some of them had the candour to confess that the work was too abstruse for their intellect and for the atmosphere they breathed. This was the finest comment on the generosity of the publishers.

The task has been enormous, but by no means disagreeable. It was a treat to study the book. I have read it many times and have found it more and more interesting as my capacity for tracing connections between remote parts, and my ability to view the book as a whole, not merely as an aggregate of parts, developed with each perusal and contemplative vision. I have also read **"Lights on Yoga," "Yogic Sadhan," "Evolution," "Ideal and Progress," "The Teaching and the Asram."** I have also had a bird's eye view of the **"Essays on the Gita."** All ideas seem to have found convergence in **"The Riddle of this World."**

But slowly and steadily, almost unconsciously, the study took a new turn. Constructive sentiments yielded, here and there, to destructive criticism, and destruction once begun moved over a mountain landscape, like an avalanche, which has no respect for beauty, natural or created, the bane of truth. I observed that Beauty and Truth varied inversely throughout the work.

I am not devoid of my share of natural malevolence which finds pleasure in critical work. Critical study precedes creative work. You had to study all the philosophies of the world with an unrivalled capacity for criticism, before you entered upon the creative work of neo-tantrism. It was a great comfort to me to know that the author of "**The Riddle**" was alive and attentive to criticism ; and any error I might make was open to correction.

It appeared to me possible that what I considered to be errors were really due to the beauty of brevity. I am not fond of beauty at the cost of truth. My mind yearned for a more expansive, elaborate and exhaustive account of the fundamental points of the new doctrine of supramentalism. But a mind once put upon guard discovers suspects in unexpected quarters. To speak plainly, I have found in the book defects which are either real errors, or apparent ones due to the abnormal circumstances in which the views of the author had to find expression. The book was probably not meant for general publication but for the use of sadhaks only, who now number large enough to consume an edition, but they are prisoners of war—the war of intellect and Supramental light. Churchill said, "Our soldiers number large in Pretoria now, but they are prisoners of war."

What is likely to satisfy a sadhak may be inadequate for the satisfaction of an outsider who is not bound by ties of obligation and ultra-rational considerations or conventions. The fact that the replies to sadhaks have

been collected and arranged for publication has naturally exposed the author to the necessity of satisfying the critical demands of those who read the book without the necessary predisposition to accept the doctrine at any cost, I mean readers who have not already committed themselves to the acceptance of it, and are not prisoners of supramentalism.

I have already said that one of my sons is one of your sadhaks. He is still in the preparatory stage, and I thought that I would be wanting in my duty as a father, if I neglected to see if he was going astray. I have no faith in pragmatic truth, and I don't believe that what is true for me need not be true for him. For the good of all and sundry it seems necessary that a systematic treatise on the new doctrine of supramental light, which is not only above intuition, but essentially different from it, be published promptly before real mischief is done by misreading.

The 'overmental zone' has been described in gloomy colours as a land of half-lights and half-truths which are worse than darkness and untruth. A passage through this zone has been hitherto supposed to be the only method of reaching the ultimate truth. A higher method must not stand on the rickety pedestal of blind faith or be supported by nothing better than an adverse criticism of existing ones. The truth gained by both the methods is subjective in character and requires strong verification. To condemn one of them is to condemn both. The differentiating qualities require to be stated with convincing precision.

You will not, I hope, take it amiss if I openly challenge the extra-doses of criticism with which the dangers of intuition have been attempted to be brought home. It seems intended more to expose the errors of Vedantism than to explicate truth.

Supramental vision may be superior to intuition. It is undoubtedly a new discovery, but its existence cannot be proved by the destruction of the latter. The whole chapter on the overmental zone seems to have been inspired more by destructive, than by constructive spirit, stimulated more by a desire to show that the world was enveloped in darkness than to illuminate it with a new light. It has been indirectly suggested that so far in the history of the world no man has found salvation in any form, viz., *salokya*, *samipya* or *sayogyia*, for want of supramental light, for the very personality of God in whom the final realization has to be achieved has been misread. The Vedantists, unable to find the true dynamic truth, set on the throne of heaven an indolent, incompetent fool, euphemistically called the Transcendental God, who is taking opiate rest leaving the cosmic goddess to rule the world.

It is even possible to gather that for an utter want of salvation, spirits after death have been compelled to wander about in the wilderness, there being no room for rebirth, the density of population having exceeded the *optimum*.

These wandering spirits resemble the evil spirits of the Holy Bible, millions of whom were sent by Christ from human bodies into those of swine and worms. That

was virtually the only redemptive work done by Christ. These spirits have been called, in the chapter on 'Overmental zone', little gods, *daityas* and positively hostile beings, who for the absence of any more agreeable work amuse themselves by leading sadhaks astray in their *yoga*. This is a very beautiful way of exposing the spitefulness of the Vedantic souls that failed to find *nirvana*, because it was sought prematurely and through a false path, which was no thoroughfare.

No direct explanation has been given as to how these spirits came into existence or how they met with their present plight. After death, we are told, a spirit goes to the psychic world for rest and not for mischief. Do these Pucks and Ariels represent souls that have failed to separate themselves from life and mind, and have no living relatives to perform *sraddha* for their benefit? Vedantism has never been condemned more vigorously and artfully even by Western metaphysicians like Gough.

It has been suggested that intuition is not absolutely necessary for a *yogin* and that supramental light may be reached by a narrower but surer way. "The transition through this intermediate zone—not obligatory, for many pass by a narrower path, is a crucial passage." But the nature of that surer way has not been indicated anywhere in the existing publications. The names of the *rishis* who have passed by this way have also not been given. It has been added, "when one founders (in the overmental zone) recovery is difficult, painful, assured

only after long struggle and endeavour.” Who are these miserable *yogins* ? Do not the Vedantists belong to this category ?

You have nowhere made a clear statement as to whether you have experience of supramental light, and if so, of how much of it and at what temperature. You have not given any indication of the parts in the discourses which are founded upon supramental knowledge, as distinguished from other parts which are based upon intellectual knowledge. This is confusing. This seems to have produced a mixture of truth and untruth, of which Dr. Sircar is so fond.

The most shocking part in the whole publication is the account of evolution given at page 8 of “**Lights on Yoga**” and at page 96 of “**The Riddle**,” which have abolished the soul from the personality of man. The Divine is involved in us in principle, not as a being. It is 200th. dilution of a living spirit. Can this dilution be regarded as a central being in our composite personality ? No, for “this world here has come out of the inconscience and developed the mind which is an instrument of ignorance”. (page 70). How long are we to wait for the descent of the supermind, so that we may have a soul within us, to guide us, to act as *anumanta*, *sakti*, *bhokta*, *bharta*. If any thing requires further explanation it is this mysterious part, more than any other part. That the theory of evolution here given has not been supramentally obtained is clear. Yet, Anil Baran Ray and Adhar Chandra Das, while quarrelling over it,

ever thought of asking you to clear up the mystery. They probably thought you would be offended if they asked you to arbitrate. Did they fear that your verdict would not be impartial ?

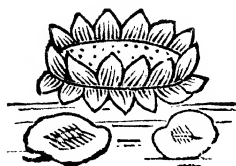
I promised at the outset that I would try my best to avoid taking advantage of the difference of age between us, and the assumption of offensive manners ; but when I had advanced far, I thought that I was doing you an injustice by leaving my ideas in comparative obscurity for the sake of conventional politeness. At the same time it occurred to me that it was impossible to give offence to one who was, by the nature of things, incapable of taking it. It would be sheer futility and fatuity to make the experiment, even if I wished to offend you. This encouraged me and in some parts I have made use of modes of expression that might appear unseemly in ordinary discourse. I shall not do you the injustice of supposing that you have taken offence and are asking for explanation. What I have done I have done for the purpose of avoiding misapprehension and misreading. Truth is higher than etiquette. Scoffing lies beyond the frontiers of my life. No scoffer could have enough patience to write a lengthy letter like the one I am sending you.

I ask you to give the world a complete treatise on the doctrine of supramentalism. I hope you will have time and strength to give it. But in any case I shall be profoundly obliged if you will kindly give me a brief reply on the points on which I am most in doubt. These points I have emphasized in the body of the letter.

I remember the famous passage in G. B. S's criticism on Darwin's theory of evolution which runs thus :— "He (Samuel Butler) was so completely submerged by the flowing tide of Darwinism that, when Darwin wanted to clear up the misunderstanding on which Butler was basing his personal attacks, Darwin's friends, very foolishly and snobbishly, persuaded him that Butler was too ill-conditioned and negligible to be answered."

I hope you have no friend of this snobbish type to dissuade you from the service of truth. If Darwin's had abolished the mind, your theory of evolution has abolished the soul of man. Darwin conciliated and convinced people by attending church to the end of his life. That was not a good method. I expect a better method of removing misapprehension. In this connection one thing has struck me very forcibly. I will plainly tell you what I think. You have not relinquished the lawyer's pertinacity. When a position has to be defended against attack the aggressive spirit is apt to overpower you, and you think more of victory than of defending the salient. I shall give an illustration. At page 96, you assured the reader that the Inconscience of the world was apparent only, the indwelling spirit working out evolution from within. At page 70, the Inconscience of the world stands as *mother tincture*, that is, undiluted and without the least infusion of spirit, mind or life consciousness. In the latter case it appears the question of the sadhak was inspired by the spirit of controversy, and he had to be vanquished by any means. I ask you to read the whole page again with

your usual equanimity and give your undistracted opinion. 'Separated truths, fragmentary truths, mutilated truths, incomplete truth, half-disputed truths, half-concealed truths, half-truths—are not these names for untruths, falsehoods, positive errors, potential falsehoods, but not actual falsehoods? No lawyer could have shown more logical acumen or ingenuity than you have done here: you are a good advocate. I cannot say you are a good lawyer. You have taken brief on the wrong side.



THE QUINTESSENCE OF AUROBINDO'S
PHILOSOPHY

THE QUINTESSENCE OF AUROBINDO'S PHILOSOPHY.

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I.

Q. I wish to know the ultimate essence, the thrice-distilled reality of Aurobindo's philosophy. Can you gratify my desire, I mean, can you satisfy my aspiration ?

Answer. I am glad you have corrected yourself. A religious philosopher should never use such words as desire, appetite, hunger, thirst, gratification. They remind one of lust, eroticism, and loathsome emotions. Do you know the meaning of philosophy ?

Q. It means 'the love of knowledge.' Does it not ?

Answer. I am glad you have not said 'lust of knowledge', which can be carried to the intensity of concupiscence for knowledge. Even an intense love of knowledge deserves to be deprecated. It is apt to carry us into the region of the unknowable ; and a man who is carried beyond the frontier imbibes a loathing for the home-land, I mean the knowable region. Some Indians prefer to live in England where theatres, cinemas, opera houses, circuses ; football, golf and cricket grounds abound, in short, where liberty, peace and bliss are perennial and widespread. Our aspiration to live in the spiritual world is comparable to this preference.

Life was pleasant in this world in primitive times. The megalomania created by the paradox that we are greater than what we are, or what we know ourselves to be, has created a passion for the other world. We want to know it, to realize it, to take possession of it and drink tumblerfuls of *ananda* in it. In the other world men do not drink water. They hate pleasure and happiness, which bring inebriation but no exhilaration. *Ananda* and bliss bring exhilaration but no inebriation. The other world is a sea of *ananda*. You need not dip a glass into it and apply it to your mouth when filled. That is risky. It is truly said, 'there is many a slip between the cup and the lip' Therefore, you establish connection between your mouth and the sea with a spiritual tube and drink incessantly, perennially. The tube is called *yoga* in Indian philosophy. With the help of it you not only know *ananda* but realize it, take possession of it, enjoy it, until you are yourself transformed into *ananda*, that is, you relinquish everything else, even your self-consciousness, your individuality, your existence. You become one with *ananda*.

II.

Q. **T**HIS is general philosophy. What is the special feature of Aurobindo's philosophy ?

Answer. Aurobindo wants to bring down the other world on this. That is the distinctive feature of his philosophy.

Q. Christ also wanted to bring down the other world on the Earth.

Answer. Yes, he tried but failed. Aurobindo has discovered a new method.

Q. How does the new method differ from the old ?

Answer. Christ wanted to change only the emotional nature of man. Aurobindo wants to change his intellectual nature also. When human nature is supramentalized the moral problem will disappear. "The solution of the moral problems can only come by pressing forward towards a greater light, a greater consciousness in which the problems themselves will not arise, because we shall have a vision which will see the world in a different way. The moral rule is a stop-gap which men are obliged to use until they can see things whole in the light of the spirit." (Pp. 85-86, *The Riddle*).

Q. What is the meaning of seeing things whole ?

Answer. A party government takes a one-sided view of things. A national government sees things whole so far as the country is concerned. It takes into account the interest of the nation as a whole. A party government looks for the interest of a particular section or community. England is now better governed because it is governed by a national government, and not by a party government. Monarchy is the worst form of government, because the king is self-conscious.

Q. How can man see things whole ?

Answer. Man cannot, Superman can see things whole. Man is worried by the moral problem, superman is free from that trouble. He has an enlarged self-consciousness which comprehends the entire race of superman.

Q. How does it concern us whether the superman is troubled or not ?

Answer. Man can transform himself into superman and thus free himself from moral scruples and worries.

Q. How can he transform himself?

Answer. He can transform himself by throwing away his animal life, his economical and ethical life, his aesthetical and intellectual life.

Q. What will remain of him then ?

Answer. Nothing will remain. But the loss will be more than compensated for by the gain of supramental light, supermind or supermanhood.

Q. Man will cease to exist and a new race will be transplanted on Earth. Is not that what you mean ?

Answer. I shall not deny it. But you must look at the interest of the Earth as a whole. You must "see things whole", not fragmentarily, part by part. What does it matter to the earth if the human race is extinguished ?

Q. The Earth will lose the best thing that it has. That will be a great loss. Will it not?

Answer. But the gain will be greater than the loss at the end of the transaction. If a business firm loses one million pounds in one department and gains two million pounds in another, does it lose or gain on the whole? You are too much attached to the human race to look at the world as a whole. The original inhabitants of America have all been killed and extirpated, but they have been replaced by whitemen. Has America lost or gained? When the human race is replaced by the superman race, the Earth will gain in the same way. Geocentricism is a higher consciousness than anthropocentricism.

Q. Will the entire human race be thus destroyed?

Answer. Aurobindo seems to think so. But Dr. M. N. Sarker thinks that the superman race will be super-added to the human race.

Q. Will not that create over-population and all the troubles of the Malthusian law? Will not food become scarce?

Answer. Supermen don't eat, don't care for money, for production, reproduction and distribution, for trade and international commerce. They don't care for pictures, and music and dancing and poetry and lawyer's power of argument or the medical practitioner's surgery, or the Engineer's skill or the coal miner's labour. The worries of Capitalism and Socialism, Masculinism and Feminism, of private and communal and national interests, do not concern the superman. He thinks only in terms of the race and its unity.

Q. If both the races subsist, what will be their relation?

Answer. The individuals of the higher race will supramentalize the individuals of the lower race. They will not treat the latter as Harijans, as the Aryan invaders treated the original inhabitants of India. We are now educating them, in a manner supramentalizing them, rather too late.

Q. But they will eventually extinguish the human race ?

Answer. No. They cannot extinguish the human race, because new births will replenish it incessantly and perennially, and there will be no wholesale supramentalization

Q. Taking supramentalization to be equivalent to death, which of the two, birth-rate and death-rate, will preponderate ?

Answer. The solution of that question will depend upon the energy displayed by members of the superman race. It is probable that the time will come when supramentalization will proceed faster than reproduction, and eventually lead to the entire extinction of the human race, and leave nobody to regret it. Your regret is groundless.

III.

Q. **W**HAT will the supermen do when the entire human race has been supramentalized ?

Answer. It is a problem which will arise near the end of eternity. Probably the more adventurous ones among the supermen will fly to some stars where supramentalization is needed ; less adventurous ones will 'cosmicize' themselves, that is "realise the cosmic Godhead, losing in it all personal self, and becoming mere channels of the universal power".

Q. Will they not virtually become slaves of the cosmic will and power ?

Answer. Yes. But remember the well-known saying "*Huxurki mazduri acchi hai*". It is better to be a slave of God than a master of men.

Q. How long will they continue slaving for the cosmic God ?

Answer. They will continue till the whole universe is first supramentalized and then cosmicized.

Q. And what will happen after that ?

Answer. Aurobindo has not light enough to answer this question. Dr. M. N. Sarker has supplied the answer. He says, "*Sakti* (cosmic Godhead) will first withdraw the play (*lila*) into Herself and then withdraw Herself into *Siva* (the Transcendental Godhead)". This is the final realization adumbrated by Aurobindo in the ever-memorable sentence : "We have to have the faith that inspite of our ignorance and errors and weaknesses and inspite of the attacks of hostile forces and inspite of any immediate appearance of failure, the

Divine will is leading us, through every circumstance, toward the final realization". The journey to this final realization is called 'Evolution', "which can be carried forward by yoga with victorious rapidity".

IV.

Q **H**OW will the supramentalization of the world take place ?

Answer. Aurobindo is not very clear on this point, and he has made different statements which do not seem to be in harmony with one another. He says, "There have been glimpses of the supermind till now, but it has not been brought down into the consciousness of the Earth and fixed there. To bring it down is the aim of our *Yoga*". (P 1, *The Riddle*).

Q. Will he bring down the glimpses or the supermind itself ?

Answer. I have said Aurobindo is not clear. Even the glimpses have a doubtful existence. He says, "the supermind is a yet unmanifested power".

Q. If it is an unmanifested power, whence will he bring it down ?

Answer. He has himself asked that question and answered it. "I have to bring it down, and from where shall I bring it down, if not from the unmanifested Transcendence, which I must reach and realize ? "

Q. How can he reach and realize the transcendental Divine before he has reached and realised the supermind ? Is not the transformation of the mind into the supermind an essential condition of realizing the transcendental consciousness ?

Answer. Certainly, transformation of the mind into supermind must precede the realization of the transcendental consciousness.

Q. Is not Aurobindo putting the cart before the horse ?

Answer. Yes, he seems to be doing so. The vision recorded in the chapter, "The triune Godhead" seems to have been inspired by spiritual intoxication. Aurobindo had an unbalanced mind at that time.

Q. And what about the intermediate cosmic consciousness ?

Answer. Here again Aurobindo is steaming in a dense fog. I give the entire statement made at page 78 "I must bring it (supermind) down from the unmanifested Transcendence, which I must reach and realize. I have to bring it into the cosmic formula, and if so, I must realize the cosmic Divine and become conscious of the cosmic self and the cosmic forces".

Q. Is he going to realize the cosmic consciousness after realizing the Transcendental ?

Answer. The context seems to show that he is going to appeal to the cosmic Divine after finishing the business with the Transcendental.

Q. He must have had an extra-dose of spiritual intoxication before he saw this vision ?

Answer. He himself seems to be aware of it. He was prepared to doubt the genuineness of this vision, but he says doubting is inadmissible, when spiritual experience is concerned. He says, "These are elements in the dynamics of spiritual experience, and I am obliged to admit them if a Divine work has to be done". (page 79, *The Riddle*).

Whatever is seen in spiritual experience, ecstatic vision, holy dream, Divine *yoga* and transcendental trance must be presumed to be genuine, true, a message from above, at least more true than the conclusions of reason and excogitation. Mutual contradiction of visions does not invalidate either of them. Radhakrishnan is hard-headed. He considers such visions to be frauds. He says, "We must respect our own dignity as rational beings and thus diminish the power of fraud". (page 219, *An Idealist View of Life*).

To me it seems, Aurobindo, when he saw the above vision, was "under the influence of little Gods or stornig Daityas or smaller beings who want to create, to materialize something and who are eager to use or influence or even possess the thoughts of the Sadhak (*yogin*) and make him their instrument for the purpose." (Pp 56-57, *The Riddle*). It is more probable that he was "under the influence of hostile beings whose sole purpose is to create confusion, falsehood, corruption of

the *sadhana* and disastrous unspiritual error". (page 57, *The Riddle*). Advanced *yogins* are liable to the same errors as mere *sadhaks* on occasions of stress and storm.

V.

Q. IT appears then that there are two kinds of supermind, one manifested and the other "yet unmanifested". Which of these two does Aurobindo really intend to bring down ?

Answer. It is impossible to answer this question. At one time he says that he will bring down the already manifested supermind, which occasionally sends glimpses to the Earth, and at another time he says he will bring down the unmanifested supermind. That he makes a real difference between the two kinds of supermind is seen from the following passage (page 15, *The Riddle*) :— "What would be the utility of a supramental creation on earth, if it were just the same thing as a supramental creation on the supramental plane. It is that, in principle, but yet something else, a triumphant new self-discovery of the Divine in conditions that are not elsewhere".

Q. He thus shows preference for the unmanifested type of supermind. Does he not ?

Answer. Certainly he does. But do you see the absurdity of the thing ? The Earth is entirely unsupramentalized at present. Either kind of supermind would

be a great gain to it. Nobody can deny that the existing supermind can be more economically brought down than the uncreated or unmanifested one. Why does not Aurobindo bring down the existing type, which he can probably do in a million years, whereas the unmanifested type will either never be brought down or require at least a myriad years to bring down? Why does he keep the world waiting so long for it? Does the world really require a supermind? If so, wisdom suggests that the existing, though inferior, type should be brought down first, and then it would be time to think of bringing down the superior type. There is nothing to show that, when once the inferior supermind has been brought down, the superior will refuse to come.

The following anecdote will be found interesting:- There was a time when Government made no communal distinction between Hindus and Mahomedans in giving away appointments. A young mussalman accepted head constableness with qualifications as a plucked I. A. In six months the Eastern Bengal Government introduced the communal system. Seventysix Mahomedans were to be appointed as Sub-Inspectors. Boys of the second and third forms of High schools were selected, but the application of the head constable was refused. He was told that he was already in the service and could not be appointed over the heads of his Hindu colleagues. Who can understand the ways of the Gods?

Q. At any rate it is certain that the Earth is not going to have supramental light for a million years. What do you think?

Answer. It will take a longer time than that.

Q. But what do the sadhaks of the *Asram* and outside ones believe ?

Answer. They are induced to believe that the supermind will descend or be brought down before their death, say in ten or twenty years.

Q. Why are they not disillusioned ?

Answer. Prophethood is meaningless without deception and also self-deception. The whole atmosphere of Pondicherry is saturated with both kinds of deception. Recently Dr. K. Ramchandra returned from Pondicherry and advertized to the subscribers of '**Advance**' that Aurobindo was a god-man, an incarnation of the Deity, visited by thousands of pilgrims, many of whom were men of the highest order of culture. Does the Doctor know what an incarnation means ? Does he know that Aurobindo himself does not pretend to be an incarnation. He is a simple guru, a teacher. Has Dr. Ramchandra read "**The Asram and the Teaching**" ? Very few men at Pondicherry read the books written by Aurobindo and published by the **Arya Mission** ; and if any of them read at all, he reads it cursorily, because he thinks that the books cannot contain anything that he does not know already. Thus the atmosphere is surcharged with falsehood, deception, self-deception; illusion and superstition. People who go there believe that they will obtain salvation if they can fall at the feet of Aurobindo, but they do not know the

meaning of salvation or that Aurobindo himself is yet unsaved, or whether he will die in *samadhi* or like Ramkrishna, die of painful cancer.

VI.

Q **W**HAT do you mean by the last innuendo ? I was thinking of being a follower of Ramkrishna, though he is dead and cannot teach me directly.

Answer. I mean Ramkrishna was not what his disciples thought him to be. He never attained *Kayasuddhi* or *Kayasiddhi*. His mind was not pure. "A mind purified, liberated and perfected can do whatever it likes with the body". "The very fact of having a purified mind makes for purity of the body, a liberated mind for liberation of the body, a perfected mind for perfection of the body, and to a certain extent as you go on with the *yoga in the Antahkarana*, the body will automatically respond to the new influences". "The first sign of *Kayasuddhi* is the disappearance of all tendency to disease ; the second is liberation from *Dandwa* of heat and cold". (Pp 72-76, *Yogic Sadhan*).

Q. Then Ramkrishna had an impure mind and an impure body ?

Answer. Don't ask me. One prophet is enough for criticism. I have vivisected Aurobindo. I dare not dissect *post mortem* another prophet. Both have followers, strong

in body, though weak in soul. This kind of strength is dreadful for critics. I am not afraid of criticism. But a *lathi* charge is a different thing. Ramkrishna's followers abound more than Aurobindo's, and they are ubiquitous. Have you taken any note of the number of centenary celebrations recently displayed? I am not so much afraid of the prophets, *paramahansas* as of their followers. My relatives were pounced upon by Aurobindo's followers, not by himself. They never care to read Aurobindo's books. Yet they have become followers. Happily they are followers, not converts. None of them has yet converted his mind into supermind and I hope they will never do it.

VII.

Q. **S**UPPOSE the supermind has been brought down by Aurobindo, no matter whether it is the manifested or the unmanifested one, and still kept in the pocket of his own consciousness. How will he impart it to the consciousness of the Earth and fix it there?

Answer. There is no definite answer to this question, because, in the first place, the consciousness of the earth is an ambiguous term. Is it the same as earth-consciousness in which the supermind is already involved in principle? Or is it the consciousness of man or human consciousness? In the first case every atom of matter will have to be supramentalized, and that must be an enormous task. Further, the method of supramentalizing an atom seems

conceptually inconceivable, unless we identify the latter with a particle of spirit. Dr. M. N. Sarker seems disposed to take the view that every atom of matter is a particle of spirit for Aurobindo.

If consciousness of the earth means human consciousness, or mental consciousness, the consciousness of every man and all men, then it seems that every man has to be supramentalized separately, and afterwards supramental consciousness will descend to his children by the law of heredity or the law of rebirth. But does a superman reproduce at all? It is only unsupramentalized men that will reproduce the species and keep it going.

Either every unit of humanity will be supramentalized by Aurobindo as he is supramentalizing his sadhaks or his sadhaks in their turn will be required to supramentalize as many units of humanity as practicable. In the latter case, suppose his sadhaks prefer to "cosmicise themselves losing in the cosmic Godhead all personal self and do not care to "have personal or divinely individual consummation for themselves". How can Aurobindo compel them to help him in the work of diffusion? Is there any stipulation to this effect in the covenant by which he accepted them as sadhaks? Will the sadhaks, when they become Gurus, compel their pupils to enter into a similar covenant?

This procedure can never come to a conclusion, unless the unsupramentalized men are compelled to give up the bad habit of begetting children.

Dr. M. N. Sarker has taken this view of the problem. He thinks whole humanity will never be supramentalized, because there is no means of compelling unsupramentalized men to give up their deep-rooted creative habit. Aurobindo himself does not seem to know how he can bring about "the resurgence of man out of the merely animal and economic life or the merely intellectual and aesthetic life". His sadhaks require food and are required to reconquer the Divine power of money, which is a piece of economic work. Nay, he himself requires food, which is part of the animal life. He refuses also to give up his right of private property in the buildings and other things of the *asram*, though he is not begetting children. Most of his sadhaks are allowed to beget children, though perhaps on a moderate scale. Complete birth-control is not yet common among them.

Thus the ambition of Aurobindo to supramentalize entire humanity is futile. It is fatuous.

Aurobindo however is hopeful. He says, "The liberated (supramentalized) soul extends its perception of unity horizontally as well as vertically. Its unity with the Transcendent One is incomplete without its unity with the cosmic Many. And that lateral unity translates itself by a multiplication—a reproduction of its own liberated state at other points in the multiplicity." The Divine (supramentalized) soul reproduces itself in similar liberated souls as the animal reproduces itself in similar bodies. Therefore, whenever even a single soul is liberated, there is a tendency to an extension and even to an outburst

of the same Divine self-consciousness in other individual souls of our terrestrial humanity."

This, however, is not convincing. It leaves untouched the argument given above. There may be extension of supramental consciousness among some men. The extension cannot comprehend entire humanity, and so long as a single man remains unsupramentalized the ideal of the unity of humanity will remain unaccomplished.

Q. The unity of humanity being the ideal of Aurobindo's teaching, what is the value of the "integral yoga", "the yoga of the *saktimarga*", "the yoga that carries forward evolution with victorious rapidity", if it remains unaccomplished to the end of Eternity when the world will fulfil itself by self-destruction, inevitably, absolutely and entirely without exception? If half the men remain unsupramentalized they remain disunited also. Thus humanity remains what it was before.

Answer. Aurobindo's ideal never had any meaning and has none as yet. He is a humbug—a very learned humbug and therefore, more mischievous than ordinary prophets, *paramahansas*, incarnations, messengers and mediums.

Q. Was Ramkrishna a humbug?

Answer. No, he was not a humbug at first. His followers made him one. Upto 1879 A. D. he had no humbugism in him, when very few men went to visit him. Till then he had no ideal, not even the ideal of individual salvation. He found pleasure in meditation and he meditated. He had not the education and training for

practising humbuggery. He was a simple man who loved to live by himself, and the only friend whose company he liked to have was God, a personal Being. Fortunately, he had the privilege to see ghosts.—a privilege which was possibly congenital or atavistic. He saw ghosts, a peculiar species of beings, afterwards metamorphosed into mythical gods by poets and mythologists, and these gods were subsequently conglomerated, somewhat incoherently, by Vedic metaphysicians into the absolute, quiescent God, endowed with dynamicity, the good God tinged with evil, the perfect God corrupted by His dynamic passions, the formless God invested with form by means of clay and stone, canvas and colour, the Eternal God subjected to the vagaries of Time by an uncontrollable passion for *Lila*, the universal God concealed in Space, the pure God transformed into a masquerader.

Q. What is the difference between Ramkrishna and Aurobindo in respect of ghost-vision ?

Answer. Aurobindo never sees ghosts. He sees designs, plans, creative arguments, transformations, consciousnesses, lights, relative position of imaginative constructions and abstractions, manipulations and mutilations. He never sees spirits but only spiritual ideas and creative power, will and forces. In short, he sees becomings, but no beings.

Ramkrishna saw concrete beings, well-formed faces, Kartic, Ganesh, Kali, 'Krishna, Christ, Mahomet who appeared before him at his call. Ramkrishna's visions were spiritistic.

Aurobindo's visions are spiritualistic, dynamic, energetic. Ramkrishna saw things, Aurobindo sees thoughts. Ramkrishna saw known objects; Aurobindo sees unknown objects. Ramkrishna generally saw Kali—the Kali of Dakshineswar temple. Aurobindo also sees Kali, but this Kali is not a stone image, but a spiritual will, power, force, abstract being, her doings, her commands and inhibitions and cosmic adventures. Ramkrishna seldom heard voices. Aurobindo hears them often. Take for instance, the vision of the unmanifested supermind issuing out of the transcendental consciousness, and accompanying him into the cosmic formula and then getting lost on the way to the consciousness of the Earth. The supermind said something like this "I cannot go now, because people are not prepared to receive me. When by *yoga* people become adequately receptive to the truth that is in me, I shall descend and appoint you as my medium to diffuse my light."

Q. What makes you take such a low view of a Paramahansa? Have you any grudge against him?

Answer. I have no grudge against any concrete being. The love of truth is strong and uncontrollable and despotically, and almost dictatorially, imperative in me. It tolerates no insult offered to reason and inflicted upon the dignity of man as a rational being. I partially agree with Dr. Radhakrishnan who, after writing half a volume on the beauty and validity of religious experiences, rejected half of them as frauds, and provisionally accepted the other half waiting for reason to develop itself by

civilization for the purpose of gaining competence to verify them.

Q. What then is your opinion about subjective insight ?

Answer. Visions are of two kinds, verifiable and unverifiable. The latter are absolutely illusory, and such of the former as stand the test of reason are acceptable.

Q. But the test of reason is uncertain. Is it not ?

Answer. Yes, Reason supplies merely a working test. Truth is as changeful as reason. Uncotrollable will-to-believe desecrates truth and creates superstition. Ramkrishna had an uncotrollable will-to-believe ; Aurobindo has full control over the will-to-believe. He leads it into the Unknowable and compels it to believe what he wants. "His will is educated". (Page 3, *Yogic Sadhan*).

VIII.

Q **W**HAT do you think of Aurobindo ? Is he really so fickle-minded or feeble-minded as you represent him to be ?

Answer. He is a pretender, an impostor, a false prophet. He wishes to be known as an incarnation of God. When his biography comes to be written, he will appear as a being who had an immaculate birth like Ramkrishna, like Bejoy Goswami, like Christ.

Q. What makes you think that he is a Pretender ?

Answer. He has never made up his mind as to what he wants to do. He does not know whether he should bring down the manifested supermind, manifested in the supramental plane and also manifested by involution in the earth-consciousness or the unmanifested supermind which is still in the womb of the Transcendental consciousness. He sometimes says, "Our business is to bring down Heaven on Earth for ourselves and mankind". (page 83, *Yogic Sadhan*). He does not say whether he will bring down the existing heaven or one that is yet unmanifested. He sometimes says. "It is not to be denied, no spiritual experience will deny that this is an unideal and unsatisfactory world, strongly marked with the stamp of inadequacy, suffering, evil". (page 92, *The Riddle*). He again says, "I am a Tantric. I regard the world as born of *ananda* and living by *ananda*, wheeling from *ananda* to *ananda*". (page 83, *Yogic Sadhan*). Does this indicate that he is going to do anything at all ? It is evident that he is not yet supramentalized, but he pretends to know the cosmic consciousness and says, "the problem of evil can be solved only by the cosmic consciousness or intelligence". (page 101, *The Riddle*). He thinks that he can "reach and realize the Transcendental and thence come out with the unmanifested supermind". Has any being gone into the transcendental ocean of consciousness and returned from there into individualized consciousness ? Again he says, "Ideals are not the ultimate Reality, for that is too high and vast for any ideal to envisage". The Transcendental is the ultimate Reality. How then can it be

possible for Aurobindo to reach and realize the Transcendental, that is, the ultimate reality, for the purpose of coaxing the latter to part at his request with an unmanifested something, which he has deliberately kept in concealment so long for an unrevealed purpose? I wonder how Aurobindo came to know of this concealed thing. He indicates that he knew about it by spiritual experience. Is it intuitive experience? Then I must say that he has been deceived by strong daityas, and hostile beings that live in the overmental zone. Is it supramental experience? How could he have supramental experience when supermind itself was concealed in the transcendental consciousness? He calls it spiritual experience. Whence came the spirit to make the spiritual experience possible? By spiritual experience, does he mean the experience of the supermind involved in the earth-consciousness, part of which was probably transmitted to his mental consciousness by evolution? Has that particle of supermind been liberated by him? Can the mind liberate the supermind? If so, what is the necessity of the supermind descending from the supramental plane to create the superman race? But this supermind is different from the unmanifested supermind. Can one type of supermind help in bringing down another type of supermind? Are the two types of supermind like the bull-dog and the pariah which can effectively pair together both for enjoyment and reproduction? Is it not likely that when the two types of supermind meet they will reproduce a new type, possibly an intermediate type?

It is elsewhere said that the ultimate reality is the final realization. Aurobindo has turned it into an

intermediate realization. He realizes the transcendental first and the cosmic next, and the supramental last of all.

Aurobindo's ideal is the unity of humanity. He says, "What then shall be our ideal ? Unity for the race." He pretends to go beyond the ideal by seeking for supramental light. This much however is tolerable. How can we allow him to go so far as the transcendental consciousness ? If he can reach and realize the transcendental consciousness by jumping over the supramental and cosmic consciousness, why should not other people do the same ? And if they can do so, where is the necessity of the unity of humanity or of the supermind ?

What is the unity of humanity equivalent to ? To achieve the ideal, Aurobindo cuts every kind of life out of man, animal, economic, aesthetic and intellectual life, and leaves him to survive in the same way as Shylock would have left Antonio to survive after he had cut a pound of flesh out of his heart.

Ordinary human beings believe that the unity of humanity can be achieved without exterminating the race and without bringing down a superior race from above. But Aurobindo has his own way of doing things. Is not supramentalization more difficult than unification ? But Aurobindo says that the two processes are one and the same. If so, what made him give preference to the name "unity of the human race" ? Would it not have been better to say, "Our ideal is the supramentalization of a small fraction of the human race" ?

IX.

Q. I believe there are other philosophers who have a craving for the unity of humanity. What is the difference between their scheme and Aurobindo's ?

Answer. Aurobindo wants to unite mankind in order to exterminate the human race. He wants to replace the human race by a superman race, like the Britishers who wanted to replace the Red Indian race by the white-man race. The other philosophers want unity of humanity in order that they may live more agreeably, live the animal life, economic, aesthetic, moral and intellectual life more strongly, yet in a more interesting and delightful way. They are too much fond of human life with all its paraphernalia and want to strengthen it, fortify it, reinforce it, polish it, civilize it and make it more agreeable. Aurobindo is too much disgusted with human life and ironically says, "the world is born of *ananda*, living in *ananda*, wheeling from *ananda* to *ananda*". He believes that the only way to mend the race is to end it, to exterminate it with the poison-gas of *yoga*. The Ego must die to enable the Self to live cheerfully, unhampered by any hostile force. He is prepared to lose the services of the Ego by psychicizing or incinerating mind, life and body or sending them each to its place, viz, the mind-plane, the life-plane and the matter-plane. He insists that animal life, economic, aesthetic and intellectual life should be strangled or transcended by a spiritual resurgence. In short, the other philosophers want to keep

the child and throw away the unclean water out of the bathing tub. Aurobindo will not be pleased unless the child also is thrown with the water. They would wash the skin of the dirty child. Aurobindo will bring out the heart, lungs, liver and the organs to give the child a complete washing. Aurobindo's scheme is heroic. He has the courage of his conviction. He is fearless. The other philosophers are cowardly, half-hearted, uncertain as to what they really want. Aurobindo has the inspiration of aspiration. The other philosophers rest upon hope only. Political unity is inadequate. League of Nations cannot unite humanity. Friendship can not achieve the unity of two thousand million human beings. Commercial unity is superficial. The unity brought about by war is ephemeral. Aurobindo therefore intends to proceed drastically.

Q. What is the method that the other philosophers wish to follow ?

Answer. Radhakrishnan would integrate the personality of man to facilitate the unity of humanity. He says "Coherence within the individual and harmony with the environment are both essentials for salvation. If we establish harmony within ourselves, overcome the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, we fulfil the first requirement. But harmony with the environment is not possible so long as there are unredeemed elements in it. We are not truly saved until the warring elements of our nature and the rivalries of individuals are both subdued into unity of life and spiritual fellowship. Perfect freedom is impossible in an imperfect world, and to those who have secured a vision of spirit work in the world so long as

there is wrong to be set right, and error to be corrected and ugliness to be banished from life. The individual who achieves unity within himself sets other men forward in desiring the same good. In a true sense the ideal individual (or man) and the perfect community arise together." (Page 307, *An Idealist View of Life*).

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore says, "The sentiments and ideals which man in his process of self-creation has built up, could be recognized in their wholeness. In all our faculties and passions there is nothing which is absolutely good or bad ; they all are the constituents of the great human personality. They are notes that are wrong when in wrong place ; our education is to make them into chords that may harmonize with the grand music of man. The animal in the savage has been transformed into higher stages in the civilized man—in other words, has attained a truer consonance with man the Divine, not through any elimination of the original materials, but through a magical grouping of them, through the severe discipline of art, the discipline of curbing and stressing in proper places, establishing a balance of lights and shadows in the background and foreground, and thus imparting a unique value to our personality in all its completeness". (Pp 125-26, *The Religion of Man*).

Q. Then all of them aim at the unification of humanity ?

Ans. The unity of humanity is the ideal of all three. It is an intermediate ideal. Radhakrishnan and Tagore wish to transform man into the ideal man. Aurobindo

wants to transform him into the superman. The first two will not mutilate man, to say nothing of killing of eliminating him. The third will leave not a trace of humanity in him. The ideal man is a man. The superman is a spirit—a liberated spirit, liberated from the dreadful Ego which constitutes half the personality of man. All three are convinced that man is not what he ought to be, and what he has the power to be. All three are convinced that the personality of man is not a universe but a multiverse as it is, and that the multiverse can be turned into a universe. All three perceive that the divine elements have by nature a stronger urge towards diversity than towards unity. With the progress of Civilization both the urges have strengthened themselves. The stronger urge has become stronger still with the dangerous prospect of complete disruption.

Radhakrishnan describes the present condition thus :—

“Ordinarily we are not whole men, real individuals, but wrecks of men, shells of individuals. We are not souls, but human automata. So our lives lack grace and depth and power. To change oneself into a whole and balanced nature, instinct and intellect, emotion and will, which have no being apart from the evolving personality, require to be integrated. We must reach a new level of consciousness to which the highest truths are revealed.” (Page 211, *I. V. L.*)

It will appear that all three want a new level of consciousness. For Aurobindo that level is supramental. For Radhakrishnan it is the intuitive or overmental. For Tagore it is a higher level of civilization. Now, supramental

consciousness is an unknown and unmanifested thing. Intuitive consciousness is deceptive, unreliable for Radha-Krishnan as well as for Aurobindo, while Tagore has no faith in it. The consciousness of civilization looks like a thing which is well-known. But is it really so? Which civilization or culture does Dr. Tagore mean? Western or Eastern? To use Spengler's words, is it Magian, Appolinian or Faustian? The perfection of a bad civilization is worse than no civilization at all.

Q. So all the ideals are defective?

Answer. They are bound to be defective. They stand upon a wrong foundation. They aim at making the impossible possible. They misread the course of evolution. They ignore the fact that the East has fallen and the West is declining. They have misunderstood human nature. They have failed to appreciate Divine nature. They wish to fight against the inevitable, against Destiny, against fate. Their arguments are pious exclamations of their wish. They have completely neglected the study of the history of the *lila*. The *lila* is growing. It is not declining. Who can stop the growth of the *lila*, when God relishes it? Suspend your judgment till the next great war. To Aurobindo I would particularly say, "don't be in haste; the *Kali yuga* is approaching its end; the *Satya yuga* is coming by the Divine order of the *Kalpas*; why waste your time and energy? *Yoga* can accelerate evolution; but it cannot interfere with the course of destiny. Rejoice, the kingdom of Heaven is at hand, the *Satya yuga* is sending glimpses. You will soon see the truth, neither half-truth nor utter untruth, and the problem

of moral discrimination will disappear; keep yourself in readiness to act as the medium of the Divine for the diffusion of light; don't keep the Divine waiting. See that you do not diffuse the light among men who have not got the appropriate amount of receptivity and retentivity and responsivity."

Q. How can he determine beforehand whether the nearest man has got the necessary receptivity and retentivity?

Answer. Nothing is easier. The man who falls at the feet of the medium and licks the dust out of the great toe has most receptivity. All Gurus follow this principle.

Q. Is not the man who gives most money for the Divine most fit to receive the supramental light?

Answer. Yes, yes, I forgot the Chapter on money in "**The mother**". The man who pays most, reconquers the money power of the Divine most, is the most meritorious among sadhaks of the leisure-time type.

Q. Is not that Divine sordidness?

Answer. You seem to know the Divine consciousness better than Aurobindo does. Who brought down the supermind out of the transcendental consciousness? Did you or I? He has realized the precise nature of the transcendental consciousness. The Transcendental told Aurobindo not to communicate the supermind to anybody who did not pay. Supramental light is a question of 'give-and-take'. He who gives most takes most. Otherwise,

why should men pay ? The Divine never leaves anything to chance. He is the Law-giver ; and He enforces His laws most strictly.

Q. Will not that retard the progress of supramentalization ?

Answer. God is not interested in supramentalizing the world, which He created for the *lila*, for His own pleasure. Is He a fool or a drunkard that He would of His own accord reduce the beauty of the *lila* ? He allowed Aurobindo to bring down the supermind, because He had to follow the law made by Himself. Aurobindo fulfilled the law by his *yoga*, and God was decent enough to allow him to bring down the supramental light.

Q. If millions of men fulfil the law of *yoga*, what then ?

Answer. God will not deviate from His law until the *lila* is substantially reduced in beauty. There are two thousand million men at present living in this world. What does it matter if ten or twelve thousand men qualify themselves for supramental light ?

Q. I see, the supramentalization of entire humanity is a fiction. Is it not ?

Answer. Suppose, somebody said, "I shall fill the world with monkeys", would you believe him ? Aurobindo says, "The Divine (supramentalized) soul reproduces itself in similar liberated souls as the animal reproduces itself in similar bodies". In how many years could the most fertile monkey reproduce enough monkeys to fill the

world ? The utmost that Aurobindo holds out to our hope is this :— “Whenever even a single soul is liberated, there is a tendency to an extension and even to an outburst of the same Divine self-consciousness in other individual souls of our terrestrial humanity”. A mere tendency does not amount to much.

God cursed Eve with inhumanly infinite fecundity. Have Eve and her daughters yet succeeded in filling the world with men ? Five thousand years have elapsed since then, and the most they could do is represented by two thousand million men, and the world has accommodation enough for a billion human beings. Reproduction has never come up to the standard that God anticipated. Aurobindo uttered a ridiculous futility when he compared the diffusion of supramental light with the reproduction of animal life. It is a confession of anticipated failure.

Dr. Sarker perceived this defect, and certified that the entire humanity would never be supramentalized, and that humanity would be divided into two races one of which will be called Superman and the other Human. The human will feel humiliated by a strong sense of his inferiority. He will suffer from defeatism and inferiority-complex. The superman will call him *asura* and loathe or fear him, and try either to kill him or send him down to lower levels of consciousness ; and turn him into a Harijan.

Q. Is that the meaning of the unity of humanity ?

Answer. Yes, it is. To bring down the supermind will result in the same state of things in the world as

happened, when, the Hindu conspirators brought down Clive, in Bengal in 1757 A. D. Bengal was being disrupted by the stupid Mahomedan rulers. It was united by the British. The Red Indian races of America who were at one time disturbing peace and prosperity were annihilated by uniting the whole population into a new race.

Q. But the British are a different race from the Bengalees ?

Answer. The Bengalee and the British at one time belonged to the same race. 'Race' is an illusion. In a few generations the same race bifurcates into two. The reality lies in the species. The superman and the human will be two races issuing out of the same species. Besides, rebirth is not confined within the bounds of a race. You may be reborn next time as an Englishman or Whiteman, and loathe your Bengalee cousins. Even birth itself is of no consequence. An Indian I. C. S. loathes his father and mother and his brothers and cousins. The reality lies in change of consciousness. The I. C. S. has achieved a higher consciousness.

XI.

Q. **W**HAT is the meaning of supermind ?

Answer. The supermind is an immensely powerful mind. Its power of vision is more extensive and also more intensive. It is like a Telescope and Microscope combined. Its vision is wider and deeper. It sees larger things and smaller things than we can. It can see the stars and the electrons and protons. It can see

the whole of the elephant at once. It can see also the invisible microbes that torment us. It sees the truth, while the mind sees falsehood also. It sees the good ; the mind sees evil also. It is thus higher than mind ; but its inability to see falsehood and evil is a defect.

Q. But the cognitive faculty is not the sole content of the human mind. The other contents are instinct, emotion, volition, imagination etc. Are these contents also more powerful in supermind ?

Answer. I am unable to answer this question, because none of the sadhaks ever asked it of Aurobindo, and the latter never had occasion to answer it.

Q. What is the general drift ?

Answer. Aurobindo has in mind only the cognitive faculty when he speaks of supermind. The supermind sees the truth. It cannot see the untruth. The supermind sees good only, it cannot see the evil. The supermind has no emotion or desire ; it has no feeling of either good or evil. Sometimes it appears that the supermind feels the good and does not feel the evil. The supermind does not suffer from the antagonism of heat and cold. "It is liberated from the *Dvandwa* of heat and cold, which will either go altogether or change to pleasurable sensations, often marked by Electrical phenomenon." (Page 72, *Yogic Sadhan*).

Q. This is unintelligible. Does Aurobindo mean to say that pleasure will remain and pain disappear ? Or, does he mean that pleasure and pain will both disappear ?

Answer. I have already told you that Aurobindo is capable of saying anything. He never himself says anything. Sakti says everything for him ; and Sakti sometimes appears as a good spirit and sometimes as an evil spirit. God and the Devil are both present in Sakti, the dynamic power that rules and regulates the universe. But why do you worry about these matters ?

Q. I was thinking as to what would happen if the superman had greater sentiency, stronger desire, and a more powerful will.

Answer. It is certain that the superman will have a stronger will. He will probably have a stronger sentiency also. But he will certainly have no desire, except the desire to know and realise the cosmic Sakti and the Transcendental Absolute. He will have no desire to realize tooth-ache or headache or liver pain or the pain of bereavement. He will be callous to pain and sensitive or receptive to pleasure.

Q. That will be dangerous for the residual humanity. The superman will feel no pain of sympathy when the human suffers from a sword-cut or a gun-shot. Accidental shooting in hunting excursions will increase. War will virtually mean massacre.

Answer. You are quite right. I wonder how Aurobindo failed to see the truth in these matters. He thinks only of pleasure which he ennobles by the name of '*ananda*'. He tries to ignore the existence of evil and he says 'the world wheels from *ananda* to *ananda*'.

Q. If a man knows only truth and no falsehood, is he not a defective ?

Answer. Certainly he is. A man ought to speak only the truth, but he ought to know both truth and falsehood. A man ought to live a good life, but he ought to know both good and evil ; otherwise he is apt to become an idiot.

Q. Have truth and goodness any connection between them ?

Answer. Don't you know God is Truth, Goodness and Beauty ? These three things are united together. Their opposites are falsehood, evil and ugliness. They do not exist in God, but they exist in man. How came they to exist in man ? That is 'the riddle of this world' and Aurobindo has tried to solve it. He has failed because he has not yet achieved "cosmic consciousness which alone can solve it." Mere supramental consciousness is not enough.

XII.

Q. **H**OW does Aurobindo's philosophy differ from the Vedanta ?

Answer. The Vedantists wanted to escape from falsehood, evil and ugliness ; Aurobindo wants to conquer them, to kill them, to annihilate them, to make their existence impossible.

Q. How can he conquer them ?

Answer. He is a bravo, a desperado, but a coward for all that. He will take shelter in supramental consciousness, which can not be approached by falsehood, evil and ugliness.

Q. If comes to my memory that Radhakrishnan finds that it is the duty of half-saved men (that is, supermind) to set right wrong, to correct error and to banish ugliness. Krishna descended to this world precisely for these purposes. He massacred the wrong-doers, extirpated the untruthful, but instead of banishing ugliness he increased its volume. Why did he not banish all the ugly women and thereby prevent the reproduction of ugliness ?

Answer. If Krishna were a perfect Avatar, there would be no necessity for another Avatar in the subsequent ages. Ramkrishna and Aurobindo would have been a redundancy. Aurobindo has discovered a means of banishing ugliness from men and women : He does not admit them to the advantages of supramentalization. He examines their photograph before accepting them as sadhaks. The ugly ones are rejected.

Q. But that will have a most pernicious effect upon residual humanity ?

Answer. Yes, that will increase the difference between man and superman. Supramentalization of half of the race will result in the 'brutalization' of the other half. Aurobindo's method resembles the practice of Eugenics.

All the beautiful men will select the beautiful women, and ugly men will have none but ugly women for gamogenetic reproduction. Ugliness will increase both in extensivity and intensivity ; and seeing that ugliness is more common than beauty in the world, the descent of Heaven upon Earth will be attended by the replacement of the Earth by Hell.

Q. But supermen will view things in their wholeness ?

Answer. Yes. But don't you perceive that by viewing things in their wholeness, they will shut their eyes to the increasing brutalization of mankind ? Krishna will have to come down again to exterminate the brutalized humanity in a new Kurukshetra. The old Kurukshetra increased the number of *varnasankaras*, a very hateful section of the society. What will the new Kurukshetra do ? Anyhow I loathe Avatars, whether they appear in Dwapara or in Kali.

Q. Then you disapprove of Krishna's method of ameliorating the condition of the world ?

Answer. Certainly, I do. His method was morally bad, and intellectually worse. His method was Darwinian on the surface and worse in the depths. It was not natural but artificial selection. Darwin believed that when a being is killed, its consciousness is lost for ever. The rejected beings create no trouble for the selected ones and their children. But Krishna knew the law of rebirth. He knew or³ ought to have known that Durjyodhan and his brothers and all miscreants of their armies would soon be reborn, and the world would return to the *status quo ante* or something worse.

Q. But Aurobindo does not kill the ugly candidates for supramentalization. He only rejects them ?

Answer. That is worse. He not only retards the progress of liberation or supramentalization, but increases the chances of bifurcation or dehumanization. Is the next child of the rejected candidate likely to be more receptive to supramental light than the father, who has just returned from Pondicherry with an awry face and an embittered consciousness ? His sons are likely to be moral lepers and intellectual brutes, their consciousness saturated with "ape and tiger" qualities. This is a brute fact which nobody can deny, whether he believes in rebirth or the law of heredity. The attempt to establish equality by intensifying inequality, to bring goodness or beauty by enlarging cruelty and ugliness is fatuous.

Q. Aurobindo sometimes seems to think that a liberated soul is like a rose that diffuses fragrance all round and inoculates the neighbourhood with sweetness. Can the fragrance of a rose refuse to produce pleasant sensation in any body walking round it ?

Answer. Yes, it can. Some people's nostrils are non-receptive to sweet smell. What is the good of holding out a rose to the face of such men ?

Q. What is the ratio between receptive and non-receptive persons in regard to truth ?

Answer. Ninety-nine percent belong to the non-receptive class. It is for this reason that the chief object of the Asram is "to teach receptivity to truth," and not to place truth before the sadhaks at once.

Q. Then why does Aurobindo reject any candidate ?

Answer. Because there can be no spirituality without contradiction. Contradiction is the essence of spiritual experience.

Q. But you are also contradicting yourself. Sometime ago you found fault with Aurobindo for accepting unqualified sadhaks. Now you censure him for rejecting them. How is this ?

Answer. You have misread me. My object is to tell Aurobindo neither to accept nor to reject any candidate. The best thing he can do for fulfilling the ideal of the unity of humanity is to close the Asram. He is, of course, at liberty to engage himself in deep meditation or *yoga* and to enjoy religious experience. He has no right to invite people to the Asram. He may move from town to town diffusing the fragrance of his supermind, but he has no right to preach and mesmerise people. He knows fully that the unity of humanity is an impossible fiction. He knows that half of humanity will remain human for ever and that the superaddition of a new race of superhumanity will make the condition of humanity worse. His persistence is inexplicable except on the supposition that "he is acting for the best according to his lights" and the lights are deceiving him. Hence the vehemence of his urge to supramental light.

He ought to know that two thousand million souls cannot be united by one individual acting upon another. There must be collective action as in the military training school. He himself says, "the divine

soul reproduces itself in similar liberated souls as the animal reproduces itself in similar bodies." The animal creates the bodies. Will the Divine (liberated) soul create liberated souls or merely transform unliberated souls into liberated ones? A bitch can reproduce four or five pups at a time. If the liberation of souls go on at this rate, what chance is there for the liberation of entire humanity? It must be borne in mind also that more than half the pups die in a week or fortnight or are killed off. Spiritual ideas expressed in biological terms are desecrated. Unrestrained metaphorization turns philosophy into bad poetry. Divine will and natural law produce a grotesque result by combination. Spirit and matter are one and the same with this difference that the spirit is guided by will and matter is controlled by law. But for Aurobindo will and law are one and the same, and so are evolution and *yoga*, and also scientific discovery and spiritual experience, logical arguments and divine vision.

XII (a).

Q. **Y**OU have often used the words 'knowing' and 'realizing'. What is the difference between them?

Answer. When a child sees a cake in the hand of another child he knows that the cake exists. When the second child says it is sweet, he knows that it is sweet. When he eats the cake he realizes its existence and sweetness.

There are two other intermediate words, 'believing' and 'understanding.' There are various degrees of intensity in knowledge. Realization means the terminal point of the intensity. You know a gun and the use of gun-powder and of the bullet. You realize their truth when you are shot down.

Q. What is the difference between the final realization and intermediate realization ?

Answer. The achievement of supramental light is an intermediate realization. The attainment of transcendental consciousness is the final realization.

Q. Can a man attain final realization without passing through all the series of intermediate realizations ?

Answer. No, he cannot. If he could, the latter would have no value.

Q. Is double promotion possible ?

Answer. No ; Aurobindo has negated it positively in '**Yogic Sadhan.**'

Q. Then, how did Aurobindo realize the Transcendental consciousness when he compelled God to manifest the unmanifested supermind ?

Answer. Aurobindo is the Transcendental God incarnated on earth. The Transcendental consciousness is always concealed within him. He opened his imaginative heart and the unmanifested became manifested at once, and he brought it down into the cosmic formula.

Q. Where is this heart ?

Answer. In the half-conscious region of his mind.

Q. What is this heart ? Is it the same as an ordinary heart ?

Answer. No, it is the heart of the soul, the very central point of it, the deepest part of the personality.

Q. What do you mean by the deepest part ?

Answer. The centre of the Earth is the deepest point of the Earth. The antipodal point is not the deepest point. People before Columbus used to think so. But they were in error. We now know the truth, because we have attained a higher consciousness. Many people know it but very few understand it, fewer people believe it, and the number who realize it is nil ; because no body has ever reached the centre of the Earth.

Q. Does not man live in the centre of the universe ?

Answer. Yes, he does live there, but not in the centre of the Earth. He is a speck of dust whirling round the Earth.

XIII.

Q. **W**HAT is the difference between "bringing down the supermind to the earth-consciousness" and "bringing down heaven for ourselves and mankind" ?

Answer. The answer depends upon the difference between the earth-consciousness and man-consciousness, that is, mental consciousness or mind-consciousness. The difference between the two is very great indeed. The life-plane stands between the mental plane and the earth-plane. If supermind is brought down to the earth-plane and not to the mind-plane, then the latter will stand below the former, and a ludicrous state of things will arise. The atoms of the Earth will be more enlightened than man, and man instead of ascending to the supramental plane will descend back to the earth-plane, and atomic life will be his ideal. If, on the other hand, the supermind is successfully brought down for ourselves and mankind, the human race will disappear, as already shewn ; and the animals and the plants will remain as they are. Further evolution from animal to man will cease ; but as the earth-consciousness will remain, new animals and plants will come out of it as now and fill the world with themselves. It is not known whether carnivores or herbivores will predominate in numbers ; and man being non-existent, this world will be a world of forests and brutes with a number of supermen who will have no interest in cutting the trees or in shooting down the brutes. The two worlds will be entirely and permanently separated. The Earth will lose its value as a human habitat. If half the men remain unsupramentalized as Dr. Sarker suggests, they will find life very difficult. They will have to be more ferocious and brutish. They will have to fight the supermen on the one hand and the brute races on the other. I have already said that supramentalization will be accompanied by brutalization of humanity. Instead of unity

of humanity we shall have a more disunited humanity—a more brutish humanity,

If, on the other hand, the earth-consciousness is supramentalized, there will be no new plants or animals and the existing ones will die out or be transformed into human beings, and the latter will take shelter in the transformed earth-consciousness, which will be the new supramental plane. In other words, the Earth will cease to be the Earth. Every atom of the Earth will be supramentalized and psychicised. The supramentalized atoms will fly about in the skies, and the Earth will disappear. Matter will disappear. The universe will be filled with spirits and the *lila* will become dull and flat. These spirits will neither eat nor reproduce, they will neither love nor hate, they will feel no pleasure or pain, they will have no work to do, they will have no imagination or emotion. The Arts, the fine arts as well as industrial arts, will disappear and the universe will be a huge expanse of uniformity amounting almost to non-entity. The cosmic God, Sakti will be a redundancy and will withdraw Herself into Siva leaving the supramentalized spirits to fly in infinite space without purpose, without meaning or significance. The *lila* will have no interest for any body. There will remain no gravitation, no heat, light or electrical sensation. The universe will return to nebulousity.

Q. I have forgotten to ask you one question. If the supermind is involved in the Earth, it is involved in every atom, and every atom has a soul. A molecule consists of several atoms. What happens to the atomic

souls when the atoms combine in the molecule ? A cell consists of a number of molecules. What happens to the molecule souls when a cell is produced ?

Answer. I do not know exactly what will happen to the atomic or molecular souls. But Dr. Tagore seems to be of opinion that every cell of the human body has a personality and a soul within it. It can reason like man. The human body is a parliament of cells, which meet to consider how best to preserve the body as a whole. What is called disease is the result of direct action taken by the minority in their revolt, which occasionally happens, against the majority. Disease is a sort of Civil war in the body. Civil war in a nation-state leads to decay, and chronic civil war leads to the death of the nation. There was chronic civil war in India when the Afghans conquered it. There was chronic civil war in India when the Mughals succeeded. There was civil war also when the British conquered India. Civil war is thus chronic, everlasting in India. That is the unsolved problem for India and for that matter, for the world. We designate Civil war by the word 'Communalism'.

Humanity has no foreign war. Its great wars are international ; and smaller ones are communal. We do not know how to terminate either kind of war. Statesmen see the surface of things and are unsuccessful. Philosophers go deeper into the problem, and trace the course of war to defects in the nature of the individual man. Many of them suggest integration of the personality of each individual man. Dr. Tagore and Dr. Radhakrishnan have made two suggestions allied to each other.

Aurobindo has made a different suggestion. Tagore thinks civilization preceded by self-consolidation is the true remedy. Radhakrishnan thinks that self-integration or self-confederation of the individual followed by harmony among men will unite mankind. Aurobindo suggests drastic mutilation of the personality of man. The first two deal with moral deficiencies, the last attributes the disunity to want of light, that is, supramental light in which the moral problems will be dissolved. Statesmen also think that want of proper light is the cause of disunion.

My own opinion is that humanity is running headlong towards complete disruption and nothing can arrest its advance in that direction. The more the knowledge that man achieves, the greater is the speed towards destruction. The world is passing through its last ordeal or crisis. Destiny is working out its own business in its own way. Neither reason nor spiritual experience nor holy vision can rescue the world from impending fate.

This world is doomed. The other world has already winded up its accounts with an enormous deficit. The world is about to go into liquidation. In the West statesmen are expecting a catastrophe for this world. In the East we have long since abandoned all hope for it. As regards the other world, philosophers are manifesting nothing except their insolvency. The intellect has become bankrupt, intuition treacherous, and an attempt is being made by Aurobindo to negotiate for

supramental light from insolvent Heaven, and by making an out and out sale of all that is best in human life viz, animal, economic, ethical, aesthetic and intellectual life.

The bridge connecting the two worlds has long been demolished. The transfirmamental cable has been cut and the messages that we sometimes receive are forgeries. Aurobindo is not merely a messenger but a medium—a broadcasting apparatus. Dr. M. N. Sarker looks upon him as such. Aurobindo thinks supramental light is easily diffusible. One lamp of it can illuminate a large circle and every lamp lighted on the circumference can immensely enlarge the area of illumination, till we reach the ends of the terrestrial world and even reach out to the consciousness of the sky.

But the truth is becoming increasingly striking that our knowledge of fundamental questions of life has made no progress during the last five thousand years, the most enlightened epoch in the history of the world. We are not yet certain as to whence we have come, whither we are going and what we are, though philosophers have been studiously at work for thousands of years. I am not aware when God began to send private messengers to this world. These messengers bring scrappy notes, and one messenger never agrees with another. When asked what they are and what they are for, they make no reply. But when people begin to say that they are representatives of God, they do not deny. Some people regard them as sons of God, others call them incarnations of the latter. Aurobindo

is being regarded as such by thousands of people who go for *Darsan*. Even Doctors of Philosophy and Literature regard him as an incarnation. Dr. Ramchandra is certain about it. But he does not know that all matter, even foecal matter, is incarnation of spirit or spirit transformed into matter. Every atom is an incarnated God.

Lila is *lila*, and it is played in the dark. The players do not see one another. Nay, no player sees himself. They leap and jump and break their limbs and blind their eyes and sit down meditating and asking themselves, "what fools we are !" It were much better if we had refused to play. But could we ? We are in the hands of Destiny. It is Destiny that compels us to ask—"What are we, whence come, whither bound ?" We have not yet satisfactorily answered the first question, because we are stupidly worried by the other two.

Are we individualized spirits ? Have we evolved out of matter ? Are matter and spirit one or different ? If they are one, what has caused them to look unlike ? If they are different, which is the better one ? Which is more agreeable or gives most *Ananda* ? Are we mortal or immortal ? Is immortality a blessing ? Why did the Rishis ask for Nirvana ? What is the meaning of final realisation for Aurobindo ? Is he afraid of immortality ? Is he afraid of mortality as the end of dynamicity ? In what sense is his own life dynamic ? Is meditation a dynamic process ? How did he escape from final realization, when he brought down the unmanifested supermind from the Transcendental consciousness ?

Is free-will good for man ? Is it better to surrender to God at discretion or with reservations ? Which of the two does Aurobindo prefer, complete surrender and absorption or personal consummation ? Can all men be sadhaks ? Ought a sadhak only to meditate ? Ought he to do work ? Ought he to meditate and do work at the same time ? What are the answers given by Aurobindo to these questions ? "Let us follow the will of God," says the prophet. "What is the will of God ?" asks the sceptic. God will reveal His will if you earnestly seek for it. How shall I seek for the Will ? How long will it take to find it ? Shall I find it before my death ? What shall I do in the meanwhile ? Do not two *yogins* find the Will to be different, Vedantic *yogin* and the Darwinian *yogin* for instance ?

Why does God keep Himself concealed ? Why does He appear in disguise ? Is masquerading meritorious for God ? Does God relish the *lila* still ? When will He cease to relish it ? Why do the prophets give us to understand that the *lila* has been played too long and it ought to be declining now ? How is it that all prophets agree in this ? Aurobindo is sitting on the fence in regard to this and other vital questions.

XV.

Q. I have listened to your eloquent lecture with great attention. But a general lecture is too much for my individualized soul. I want to know things

fragmentarily. That method is more intelligible for me. Now tell me, if the supermind descends upon man and transforms him into superman, by drastically mutilating him or otherwise, will that affect the forces, powers, beings now living in the mind-plane, which is different from the man-plane? Will then supraphysical beings become functionless?

Answer. Well, you need not dilate upon dilettantish nonsense. It is sheer waste of time to discuss these things and to enter into particulars. It is enough to look at them in their wholeness while your personality remains disintegrated, incoherent, unharmonized, pluralised, unmusical, unrhythmical, untuned, confused, perplexed, unintelligible, and the values remain unsettled, shifting, now trying to swim against the current, now resigning themselves to the capricious will of the unknown and unknowable.

Aurobindo ought either to have given details of evolution and *yoga*, of spirit and matter, of consciousness in its countless forms, of will and order, of surrender and personal consummation, of staticity and dynamism, of final and intermediate realization, of supermind, cosmic mind, transcendental mind, normal-mental mind, and inframental mind, higher mind and overmental mind, luminous mind and penumbritic mind, of conscience, super-conscience, inconscience, and half-conscience, of meditation and creative work, of plant life, animal life, human life and supramental life, of glimpsing supermind and unmanifested supermind, of liberated and unliberated souls, of biological

reproduction and spiritual procreation, of the graded worlds and the occult worlds, of the intuitive and non-intuitive passage to the supramental plane, of *ananda* and suffering, of truth, half-truth and untruth —or not meddled with them at all.

He speaks of spiritual experience. Every imaginative speculation is carried by him into the meditation room and there transformed into spiritual experience or vision and endowed with the validity of Divine Truth. He is a magician and mesmeriser who can create truth made to order for his sadhaks and for his sadhaks only. He never wrote his books for outsiders or critics. He is himself a colossal critic who rejects the entire range of Indian Philosophy, Vedantism, Vaishnavism, Buddhism, Jainism, even Tantrism on the ground that they were conceived in the ante-supramental age, and are mere products of instinct or imaginative emotion and primitive intuition. They represent at best half-truths, half-lights, half sense (which is neither common aense nor scientific sense, to say nothing of philosophic sense). But his critical attacks are tactful and of the guerilla type : a nibbling here, a poking there and a stabbing at last. His destructive work is admirable for a man of the critical temperament. His constructive work pleases only those in whom the receptive temperament brought up in an atmosphere of credulity is rampant.

You must constantly bear in mind that "**The Riddle of this World**" and "**Lights on Yoga**" were written only for the satisfaction of his Sadhaks. They were published and made available for the general reader either by mistake or

by the necessity of "reconquering the divine power of money from usurpers and asuras, for that is the supramental way for the Sadhaks". (Page 21, *The Mother*.)

XVI.

Q. **I**NSPITE of all that you have said in disparagement of Aurobindo's philosophy or metaphysical speculation or supramental experience or mere mythology, I confess I feel an urge towards it. Can you tell me whether a man in active life can successfully follow the new *yoga*, the dynamic *yoga*, the *yoga* of the *Sakti-marga*, brought to light by Aurobindo ?

Answer. Several thousand young men have had this urge and have become entangled in confusion, illusion, superstition. They do not try to understand Aurobindo's philosophy, but they swallow with avidity all the nonsense that his followers utter with regard to his character and power as an inspired prophet, a spiritual Knight-errant, something superior to the Rishis of old, a supramental unit of humanity, a *liaison* officer between the East and the West, in whom the best that exist in the two hemispheres are blended in perfect harmony, a spiritualist who has assimilated matter to spirit and can transform the one into the other, a magician who virtually lives on the food-value of air, who knows the arts of physicization and psychicization and who never suffers from disease or the antagonism of heat and cold, pleasure and pain, truth and falsehood, whose

excretive activity is all but nil, who challenges the law of gravitation, who lives in divine silence for weeks and months, all but a rival to the Cosmic Godhead, whose personal consummation is miles above that of the highest humanity, and whose asram is no way inferior to Heaven, but rather superior because it is a new discovery, and built according to an up-to-date spiritual plan. To be in it is to feel like a superior person, or half-god half-man.

Q. These ironies do not please me. I want to know if a man in active life can follow the new *yoga*.

Answer. It is impossible to answer that question. Aurobindo is himself unable to answer it satisfactorily. He is wavering between two extremes, but he feels no perplexity about it. He leaves you "to act for the best according to your lights", and if your lights suggest that you should both work and meditate, you are at liberty to give half your time to work and devote the other half to meditation or entirely to work. But he has given three definite warnings to his disciples:—(1) that a sadhak should be a sadhak only and no worker, until his will has attained *siddhi*; (2) that if a sadhak does no work he will lose his balance of mind, which will be disintegrated and make yogic sadhana impossible for him; (3) that work should be done for the divine and the divine alone, if it is done at all.

Q. How long will it take to make the will *siddha*?

Answer. That is an unsettled point. It may take half a century or half a million centuries to bring *siddhi*.

to the will. The truth is nobody has down to the present day attained this *siddhi*; for all the work that has been done in this world is undivine.

Q. Suppose a policeman, a clerk or Magistrate takes no bribe. Is his work undivine ?

Answer. Taking or not taking a bribe is no criterion of divine work. The acid test of divine work is whether the money earned is devoted to the work of supramentalization of mankind. According to the opinion of Dr. M. N. Sarker God has descended in Pondicherry and selected Aurobindo as His medium for the supramentalization of the world. It follows therefore that whatever money is spent on other purposes is undivinely wasted.

XVII.

Q. I have a family to support, and I cannot afford to wait half a century for the perfection of the will, which seems to be the minimum for those who exclusively devote themselves to meditation. If, on the other hand, I divide my time between work and meditation I may have to run through all the eight million and four hundred thousand rebirths mentioned in the scriptures, whose truth is not denied by Aurobindo. I am therefore in a fix.

Answer. I am glad you realize the difficulties of the situation.

Q. Is it possible to obtain redemption or supramental light by work only ?

Answer. Without thought behind, it is an inconceivable thing. If the thought is spiritual, and not worldly, that is, if it is concentrated in the other world, the act that it inspires becomes redemptive, though it is actually done in this world. In this sense there is one kind of redemptive work which acts or produces its desired effect very quickly.

Q. What is that work ?

Answer. That work is "the reconquest of the divine power of money for the divine to whom it legitimately belongs and using it divinely for the divine life," which has been dangerously enfeebled by the influence of usurpers and asuras. "This reconquest is the supramental way for the sadhaks." (Page 21, *The Mother*).

Q. What is the meaning of the supramental way of living ?

Answer. It means the way in which supermen will live prospectively and in which liberated spirits live at present.

Q. But supermen maintain no family. I believe therefore that the maintenance of a family is opposed to the supramental way of living.

Answer. But, while you are a man you must eat and bring up a family. When you are fully transformed you will neither eat nor marry. During the interregnum you must gradually reduce your diet and control your reproductive power.

Q. How to control the reproductive power ?

Answer. I suppose you are making a confusion between reproductive activity and sexual enjoyment. Sexual enjoyment means "pleasurable sensation marked by electrical phenomena" (Page 76, *Yogic Sadhan*). That sensation you need not forego. Reproductive activity is bad, unclean, unholy, unedifying. Holy men, incarnations of the Deity, never come into existence by this unclean process. Their birth is immaculate.

Q. But how am I to separate the electrical sensation from the reproductive waste-product ?

Answer. That is a problem of science. Without science there can be no philosophy or metaphysics or supramental light or "liberation of spirits". Science has discovered the power of birth-control which lay concealed within us, in the same way as "the divine self and consciousness is concealed within each human being." (Page 6, *The Teaching and the Asram*). The *Yoga* has discovered the one ; Science has discovered the other.

Q. What then am I to do ?

Answer. First discover the power of birth-control to prevent the multiplication of the family. Next reduce the diet of your already existing children. They will either become sadhaks at Pondicherry or quit your family by the easy process of starvation to seek for rebirth in a more asuric family. Eventually, you will get rid of the family, that is, your spirit will be liberated from the burden of maintaining it ; and gradually general liberation of the spirit will follow, enabling you to become an exclusively contemplative sadhak. You

may leave your wife to take care of herself or permit her to live in the asram, and as the Master allowed his own wife to live in it for about two years after which she left the asram of her own accord, thus giving complete emancipation to her husband from the last vestige of his domestic responsibility.

Q. What will become of the Divine power of money when the world is supramentalized ?

Q. Money is a manifestation of the Divine power. It is a pivotal power. When the world is supramentalized the cosmic God will withdraw this power into Himself, as the first act in the decline of the *lila*. That will be a symbolic declaration by God regarding His evolutionary relations to the *lila*. In plain words, God will give the world to understand that He is tired of the *lila*, and that everyman should reorientate his moral sense and general attitude towards life so as to facilitate the rolling down of the Drop-scene.

XVIII.

Q. **W**HAT is the meaning of unity of humanity ?

Answer. When mankind has one will, humanity will be united.

Q. But there are many wills in man. Will they also be united ?

Answer. What do you mean ?

Q. A man has a will to educate himself ; he has also the will to enrich himself ; also the will-to-power, the will-to-please, the will-to-enjoyment of the fine arts, the will-to-reproduction, the will-to-fame, the will-to-exploitation, the will-to-victory. Will these wills be united ?

Answer. They will be united indirectly. What is sought to be united is the will-to-death. The wills you have enumerated are the corollaries to the will-to-life. When the will-to-life disappears the ancillary wills will disappear automatically.

Q. I now fully grasp the meaning of the unity of humanity. But what makes you think that Aurobindo wants mankind to unite the will-to-death ?

Answer. He wants to kill animal life. Is not man an animal ? He is a political animal, an economic animal, an ethical animal, an aesthetic animal, an intelligent animal. Aurobindo wants to kill all this animalism and to substitute in their place spiritual animalism to which he gives the name of supramental dynamism. Animalism and dynamism are one and the same. Both mean life, consciousness, power, animation.

XIX.

Q. **W**HAT is the meaning of harmony among mankind, the term used by Radhakrishnan ?

Answer. When two persons have the same feeling they are said to be in harmony. When two children see a cake they have the same feeling. The mouth of each of them waters. Up to this point perfect harmony exists between them. Disharmony comes when each of them wants to eat the whole cake.

Q. Suppose two cakes were presented to them. What would happen ?

Answer. Each of them would want to have both, one for the morning and the other for the evening.

Q. Then how can harmony be attained ?

Answer. If you presented a million cakes to the two children each of them would fight for all of them. The best way to harmonise them is to take away the fighting proclivity and power from each of them.

Q. How can you take away the fighting power ?

Answer. By infusing in both of them the will-to-death. Some of the great powers of Europe were recently inoculating themselves with the will-to-death. They reduced their armies and armaments and began to feel that they were degenerating, getting weaker and suffering from trade-depression. The will-to-life has come again. Herr Hitler, the country man of Herr Nietzsche is showing the way to the rest of the world. He is a Superman, There are two types of Supermen. The one type has the will-to-live and to live in this world, and to live with dignity and self-respect and self-consciousness. The other type has the will-to death, the will to relinquish personal dignity, self-respect and self consciousness.

Q. They have the will to supramentalize themselves ?

Answer. They must first forego self-consciousness and then supramentalize themselves. The first part of the process is real, the second ideal. When reality has overtaken mankind, it will keep out the ideal with catastrophic results. We shall lose our self-consciousness and never get the light. Besides, light destroys life. We must therefore beware of more light. Light in small measure is fairly good for man. Excessive light kills him. It is attractive but treacherous. It creates in us an urge towards itself ; and when we come sufficiently close to it, it burns us and reduces us to ashes. Love of light is catastrophic. Millions of moths die every evening round our lamps by the love of light.

Life would be intolerable, if we saw all kinds of microbes constantly hovering in batches of millions round our faces. Sound light is worse than vision light. If our power of hearing were increased so that every man heard every sound made in every part of the world, we would have no sleep or rest. We would live surrounded by a hideous noise day and night. We would suffer from perennial shell-shock. Suppose we heard from Bengal the sound of falling Italian bombs exploding in Abyssinia, what would be our condition ? Now think of olfaction light. What a dreadful thing ? The night soil, the corpses, the carcasses, municipal refuse, and sewerage would mix their smell with rose and lavender and madden us day and night.

Beware of light of all kinds. Sapramental light, cosmic light, transcendental light, vision light, sound light,

olfaction light, touch light and sex light, if you have the will-to-live,—to live heroically, victoriously, triumphantly. Don't try to live comfortably, pleasantly, reposefully, delightfully.

The cry for more light is not a new cry. The light of science has brought Europe to the verge of ruin. The light of philosophy has created the urge to Nirvana in India. Light is a catastrophic power.

"Light", says Dr. Tagore, "as the radiant energy of creation started the ring-dance of atoms in a diminutive sky and also the dance of the stars, lonely theatre of time and space." Light will roll down the drop-scene over the universal theatre. Light created life ; light will destroy it. Creation is finished : destruction is impending.

Dr. Tagore has said light strengthens life and enables man to challenge God in a competitive fight and turn him into a beggar asking for alms. Human light dims divine light, invents by creative art the Ideal man and expels God from Man's Universe.

XX.

Q. **W**HAT does Dr. Tagore want by way of unity of humanity ?

Answer. He wants musical unity.

Q. How does that differ from harmony ?

Answer, Harmony means absence of noise, mere absence of disharmony or disunity. Music is finer, higher and sweeter than mere harmony. There is melody in it, the melody of love.

Q. Love for every man and all men ? Or love for humanity in its wholeness ?

Answer. It is difficult to answer that question. In early life he revelled in love for individual personalities. He then became a lover of all men and ultimately transformed his love into love for humanity in its wholeness, which means impersonal love or love for nobody in particular, but love for abstract humanity, which however he considers capable of being transfigured into the concrete Ideal man.

Q. Can you give me an example of disharmony and noise ?

Answer. When the will-to-live inspires one being and the will-to-kill it inspires another, there is disharmony. The frog is inspired by the will-to-live and the snake is inspired by the will-to-eat it. There is disharmony. When the snake has swallowed the frog harmony is re-established. The weasel creates disharmony again by attacking the snake. Harmony is restored when the snake is killed by the weasel.

In this way harmony and disharmony are rhythmically alternating with each other. The two Doctors, Radhakrishnan and Tagore want that the frog and the snake should peacefully live together for ever.

Q. How long can they live together in a peaceful way ? Will not the snake die of starvation ?

Answer. Both the Doctors are unable to answer this question. But Aurobindo has a good answer. Let the frog and the snake give up the bad habit of eating, that is, give up their animal life and unity will come automatically. Let them fulfil the Will of God, and harmony and unity will come spontaneously.

Q. How can they know the Will of God ?

Answer. Let them supramentalize themselves, and they will find no difficulty in knowing the Will of God.

Q. Are they ripe for supramentalization ?

Answer. *Sachchidananda* is within each of them, but self-imprisoned. Let them emancipate Him and He will tell them His own will.

Q. How can they emancipate *Sachchidananda*, when He has not been imprisoned by either of them ? Will it not be easier for *Sachchidananda* to emancipate Himself in the same way as He imprisoned Himself ? Is not the imprisonment a mere pretence ? "I only pretend to be bound" (page 85, *Yogic Sadhan*)

Answer. That is not His will. His will is to remain in real or pretended self-imprisonment until the frog and the snake have mentalized themselves and transformed themselves into human beings. Then the human beings, thus produced, will allure the supermind, the existing supermind to descend and transform them into

supermen, and when they have been thus transformed disharmony will disappear from the Earth, so far as it is due to their evil nature.

Q. But how can the supermind descend ? The supermind that is to come down is not the supermind that exists in the supramental plane. The supermind that will turn men into supermen is yet unmanifested, and concealed in the transcendental consciousness.

Answer. By the time the snake and the frog are transformed into men Aurobindo will be able to bring down from the transcendental consciousness the appropriate supermind.

Q. In what time will the double process be accomplished, viz, the ascent of the frog and the snake and the descent of the supermind ?

Answer. Time is of no significance. What Evolution cannot do in ten million years *Yoga* can accomplish in ten hours

Q. But the frog and the snake cannot perform *Yoga*. Can they ?

Answer. They will not perform *Yoga*, but *Isvara* within them will perform it.

Q. Confusion carried into chaos !

XXI.

Q. **I**s the will of God immutable ?

Answer. It was immutable for long ages in the pre-lila days. The creation of the *lila* was possible

because God transformed His will-to-quiescence to the will-to-dynamicity. Since then God's will has been changing as rapidly as human will. He is always afraid that the *tila*, "the very soul of reality" may become dull and insipid. He has therefore to change His will, which He keeps constantly on the alert.

Q. If God's will is so changeful how can a man know it ?

Answer. He can know it supramentally. The supermind being immediate and direct in its vision, can know and realise every new phenomenon that happens either in this world or in the psychic world, or in the transcendental solitude, where Siva is perpetually engaged in *yoga*.

Q. Then a man must wait for supramental light before he can know the Will of God ?

Answer. No, he need not wait so long. He can appeal to faith, and faith is a better guide than even supramental light (Page 108, *The Riddle*).

Q. How can he appeal to faith ?

Answer. He can mobilize the will-to-believe, and the latter will bend faith in any direction it chooses.

Q. Is God's will identical with what is suggested by the will-to-believe ?

Answer. Certainly it is ; otherwise religious life would have been impossible. Whenever the will-to-believe makes any suggestion you hear a voice descending from above to express Divine approval of the same. In other

words, God believes what man believes. What is man ? Is he not the soul, the real self, the self of man as well as the self of God ? Whatever the soul suggests is approved by God. You must make no distinction between the soul and God. They are identical. The soul is the Divine personality dynamising on the spot. It is foolish to distinguish between the District Magistrate and the Governor. They work towards the same end and are virtually the same. It is foolishness to appeal to Government against the District Magistrate's report.

XXII.

Q. **W**ILL unity, harmony and music never come to this world ?

Answer. None of the three prophets believes that they will ever come. Dr. Sircar says, "Lila is the very soul of reality for Aurobindo". Can Lila and Unity and Harmony and Music exist together ? Will Aurobindo fling away the reality for the sake of the unity ? The idea of the unity of humanity came to him in early days when he was unsuccessful in uniting Bengal. He had no spiritual experience in those days. Subsequently he supplanted the idea of unity of humanity by that of supramentality. He tried to deceive us by saying that the unity of humanity and supramentalization of humanity were identical processes.

If unity and harmony were the fundamental characteristics of the lila it would have no value either for man or God. Lila means multiplicity and variety and incompatibility, disintegration, dismemberment, disharmony, noise antagonizing with unity, uniformity, coherence, integral existence, consolidation, harmony and music. Until it is proved to our satisfaction that God has changed His mind and will regarding the continuance of the lila, we can never accept the pious wish for the unity of humanity entertained by philosophers and statesmen with due realization of reality.

The only conceivable unity is the unity of the will-to-death, will-to-nirvana, will-to-divine-absorption, will-to-withdrawnness, extinction, non-entitization.

Unity is incompatible with "personal consummation", which is the distinctive characteristic of Aurobindoism, as contrasted with Vedantism and Buddhism. If anybody has the will-to-live, it is Aurobindo. He is enamoured of the lila. He has given no reason to show how the lila can be made more attractive by unity of humanity. He is double-minded. The Ego and the Self in him are alternately guiding him in a most unrhythmical way. The mind is supramentalized; the self is by nature a spiritual being. He is unconsciously ruled now by the supermind and now by the self or soul. It is dangerous to supramentalize oneself. But Aurobindo even cosmicises and transcendentalizes himself at pleasure. Nothing is impossible for him. There is nothing which he is

incapable of doing. He is a preternatural pretender, an interminable impostor, a fascinating spiritual fabricator.

XXIII

Q. **H**AVE these three prophets done anything calculated to realize the truth of unity, harmony or music ?

Answer. There are two operative forces that lead towards these goals. They are (1) work and (2) word. The prophets give us words, dynamic words, effective words, most fascinating words. They say "seek for the truth, knock for it, die for it and the truth will be revealed unto you". "Seek for light, and more light, and still more light and it will come unto you". "Gather together all illusions, superstitions, traditions, mischievous conventions and make a bonfire of them". "Love thy neighbour as thyself and the kingdom of Heaven will descend on Earth". "Know thyself and the universe will reveal itself to you". "Kill the ego and save the soul". "The soul is the master of the ego, but it is a captive in its grasp". "It is not a prisoner, it only pretends to be bound". "Act for the best according to your lights and increase your lights for the best". "Nobody can deny that evil is rampant and good is feeble" ; but know that "the world is born of ananda, living by ananda, wheeling from ananda to ananda". These are words, most fascinating words. Radhakrishnan once said, "We do not love the coloured races". But he did not

mean that he did not love his countrymen, who were all coloured in the skin. He only meant that he had transformed himself into a whiteman, uncoloured or discoloured man and united brown and white humanity. The address in which the sentence occurs was delivered before an English audience on British soil. Anyhow words are deceptive, misleading, disastrously ruinous. The prophets give us words because they have nothing else to give.

As to work, that must be left to the audience. The utility of the division of labour must be borne in mind. Prophets do not work and those who work have no light, do not know the truth. It is manifest the world is going from bad to worse, because work and word are disunited, out of harmony, unmusical. Let the prophets come into the field of work, and humanity will be united in five years. Neither word nor work can by itself redeem the world.

How can anybody do any work for the unity of humanity? Dr. Tagore says, "We must work for all (for the good of all). When I use the words for all, I do not mean for a countless number of individuals. All work that is good, however small in extent, is universal in character". Is it possible to do work of this kind? When the whole is the summated total of multiplicity superadded to variety its true interest is unknowable. To work for the good of the unknowable is sheer fatuity. The fine arts surely do not help us. The Santinekatan is steadily

losing its attraction. It has lost its universality of character. It was never intended for the poor majority of humanity.

Aurobindo says, "I mean by work action done for the Divine and more and more in union with the Divine ; for the Divine alone and nothing else". How beautiful, how fascinating, how meaningless, how unintelligible ! Man working for the good of the Divine !

Prophets are cowards. They are commanding officers in the field of battle, who give ambiguous orders for a united charge against the enemy and themselves ride back from behind the fire-line.

You cannot expect them to give you both word and work. They are above work. Work is menial. There is no "personal consummation " in menial work. They see God in His wholeness. They see the universe, which is really a multiverse, in its wholeness. They see mankind in their wholeness, and are paralysed by their vision. They suffer from megalomania, from spiritual snobbishness, from wholeness of vision, and become confused when they are encountered by parts and fragments and particulars and details. They can fly in the air and swim in the water, but they do not know how to live on the Earth.

They seek for light useful for the other world, and lose all the light that is likely to be useful for life in this world. They lose the latter light first and fail to achieve the former. The case of Aurobindo is different. He has retained the light for this world, and is seeking for the

light required for the other world. He is presenting a confused light for his sadhaks. "Money and Meditation" is his motto. He requires money for the Asram. He requires meditation to supramentalize, cosmicise and transcendentalize himself, and mesmerise, inhumanise his sadhaks.

XXIV.

Q. **C**AN you tell me why Aurobindo contradicts himself so frequently and yet his popularity goes on increasing?

Answer. Do you want to associate truth with popularity? Do you evaluate truth by the number of votes cast in its favour? Then you had better not consult me. The minority create truth, and the majority corrupt it. That is the law of the life of truth. But this does not hold good with respect to scientific truth. There the minority create truth and the majority accept it, not at once but slowly and steadily. The more readily a truth is accepted the more quickly it becomes a half-truth. All that is worth living for in this world is the creation of the minority. The majority never create anything. Their duty is to accept or reject, not to give reason for acceptance or rejection. Their judgment is founded upon emotion. They have their will-to-believe, and their will is guided by emotion. The instinct of imitativeness is

strong in them. They believe because others, known to them, believe. They admire and worship a thing because others admire and worship it. High truths call for high consciousness ; low truths attract low consciousness. Supramental truths transcend human consciousness.

Aurobindo is most popular among those who have least knowledge of his views of life, who have read least the books written by him, and listen most to gossips about his doings with great receptivity and responsivity. They arduously cultivate these two qualities, viz, receptivity to illusion and responsivity to deception.

You have heard of Heaven, and if you have a mind endowed with a strong imagination you must have envisaged that world more or less accurately. Those who have heard of the Asram envisage it as a half-heavenly place where men and women work not, and yet are fed and dressed. The idea of living without work has an ineffable fascination for the human mind. Paradise is the place where Adam and Eve lived in the blissful way. The fall of man means fall from this paradise. The reconquest of Paradise is the ideal of life. The Asram is half-a-Paradise. It lies somewhere between this and the other world. Who would not like to go to such a place ? Once in it, you are reluctant to come out of it. You have to come out of it by the urge to reconquer the divine power of money from the usurpers. Where can you find a better God than one who sends you to reconquer money, and indirectly encourages you to exploit people. Other religions condone exploitation. Aurobindoism encourages it. Earn money

and send part of it to the asram, for it belongs to the Divine, and the Divine has descended, in the opinion of Dr. Sircar, in Pondicherry. Earning money is supramental work, says Aurobindo.

Why should not Aurobindo be popular ? As to the contradictions to which you have alluded in your questions, you are somewhat uncritical. When two conflicting conceptions come out of the same consciousness, they are said to contradict each other. But Aurobindo's consciousness is constantly evolving and becoming different. He never has the same consciousness on two consecutive days, to say nothing of weeks months and years. In twenty years he has evolved from manhood to supermanhood. He is now close to the cosmic consciousness. He has already enjoyed transcendental consciousness temporarily, when he brought down from it the unmanifested supermind. How then can you expect stability, staticity, immobility, immutability and everlasting inertia of conviction, generated in an evolving consciousness ? God alone was for long ages supposed not to contradict Himself. He lived in perfect silence, withdrawnness, absoluteness. Having however assumed dynamicity in Sakti, He has lost His control over His consciousness. The Divine means anything between the lowest supramental and the highest transcendental consciousness. What is good at one moment becomes evil at another. What is true or beautiful at one moment becomes false or ugly at another. This is the Riddle of this World. Spiritual evolution can alone explain it, and spiritual evolution has been discovered by Aurobindo. Why should he not be popular ?

Evolution can make the poor man rich, the illiterate learned, the asura, saintly. Is not Darwin popular? He is popular among all classes of people. Bernard Shaw says, "One touch of Darwin makes the whole world kin". Darwin and Aurobindo are both prophets of competition, evolution, and contradiction. The evolution of consciousness solves everything by dissolving it.

In the name of philosophy Aurobindo is broadcasting illusions, deceptions, superstitions, speculative inconsequentialities and finely dressed irrelevances. As to the asram, the atmosphere is saturated with a perfumed mixture of all of them. The wandering sadhaks never try to understand the philosophy, but they know all the ingeniously invented gossips current in the asram about the height of the Master's consciousness, which some regard as supramental, some as cosmic, and the rest as transcendental. He has experience of all three gained in the adventure in the Divine firmament which enabled him to bring down the "unmanifested supermind" from the unrelated quiescence of the Transcendental. (p 78, **The Riddle of this world**). The experience was so tremendous that Aurobindo himself feels the pressure of his inadequacy to realize its truth.

'Aurobindo' is an auspicious name. It is associated with *aureola* and Divinity. The name 'Arvind Mills' adopted by a Cotton Mill in the Southern Presidency affords ample evidence of the reverence which even the "sordid usurpers of the divine power of money" feel for the great personality. I hope the reconquest of this power

will now be a smooth business, for it bespeaks "the supramental way of life not for the sadhaks only but for all mankind".

Unemployment in this world ordinarily gives opportunity for employment in the other. Also we know by tradition that spiritual food has a superior food-value compared with terrestrial food. People live much longer in the other world, because they have better nourishment. Yet, "with all its faults we love the Earth still". Aurobindo's spiritual scheme is wonderful. It is a combination of all that is good in the other world with all that is wholesome in *this*. The other world will be brought down on this. When the heavens fall we all shall catch larks. We shall have both apple and *ananda*. The prospect is alluring, and seeing that truth is plastic in the hands of the individualized spirit it can not be said that Aurobindo has altogether failed.

Q. What makes you take such an optimistic view ?

Answer. The idea that God has incarnated Himself in Aurobindo is almost unanimously cherished by the sadhaks. A B. Sc. of London University who has become a sadhak for about a year and a half believes that Aurobindo can cure diseases like Christ. It seems, in his opinion, most diseases are due to evil spirits. Even scientifically trained medical men who were gross materialists a few years ago attribute most diseases to living microbes which are incarnations of evil spirits in the same way as holy men are incarnations of the good Spirit

or God. This learned man of London University, when attacked by malarious fever at Calcutta sent a reply-prepaid message to Aurobindo for his blessings and duly thanked him by a subsequent message when the malady had left him. He did not however forget to call in a medical practitioner. Probably he suspected that the message might miscarry, and the sanctifying grace or extreme unction might be missed by a lapse in the Telegraph department.

Q. Well, I do not attach much importance to the notions, faiths, beliefs and experiences of plastic-minded young men. Does any philosopher believe Aurobindo to be an incarnation of the Divine ?

Answer. Dr. K. Ramchandra, who addressed a letter to "Advance" published on 7th. March last, believes Aurobindo to be an incarnation of God. He said he had come to this conclusion by careful investigation in the Asram and was prepared to give further information on the subject, if anybody wanted it.

Q. Can you mention any other philosopher ?

Answer. Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar, the rising sun in the Indian world of philosophy, believes something which comes very near to it. He thinks God has descended at Pondicherry and selected Aurobindo as his medium or agent for the diffusion of supramental light under His Own personal supervision.

XXV.

Q. **W**HAT is the difference between an incarnation and a medium ?

Answer. A medium is born as a man by a clumsy unclean process as a waste-product of sexual intercourse, whose primary object is to produce "an electric pleasurable sensation". (p 76, Sadhan). In the incarnation there is no mark of sexual intercourse, and it is not a waste-product at all. It is the reality designed by the Deity. In sexual intercourse the urge comes from the Devil, who deceives the couple and throws upon them the burden of maintaining a family.

Q. I now understand why scriptures insist that there should be no sexual intercourse when the primary object is not reproduction, but pleasurable sensation. Such intercourse is sinful. Even medical men insist that there should be no sexual intercourse from the moment of the conception to that of parturition, for there is danger of two or more children being born at the same time, with the risk of all of them dying in infancy. Yes, I know much about birth. Can you enlighten me regarding the process of rebirth ?

Answer. When a man dies his spirit leaves the body, mind and life and goes to the other world for rest, absolute rest. He is not allowed to mix with the fresh spirits there. He is bound by a covenant to come back to this world and to seek for rebirth.

Q. Does he seek for a suitable woman to bring him forth ?

Answer. No. He seeks for a married man who bears a character similar to his own and incarnates himself in the form of a sperm-cell. This cell in the usual course attacks a germ-cell in the uterus of the wife of the man and settles there for ten months. It rapidly grows into a baby and at length breaks out. It does not necessarily kill the woman but weakens her temporarily.

Q. And how does God incarnate Himself ?

Answer. God does not incarnate Himself in a sperm-cell. He enters directly into the uterus of a pure woman and there settles and grows like an ordinary baby. He also comes out like the latter.

Q. What do you mean by a pure woman ?

Answer. The purest woman is a virgin. Purity decreases with the number of times a woman has had sexual intercourse with a man. When she has had such experience with more than one man she becomes positively impure.

XXVI.

Q. **W**HAT is the difference between a superman and an incarnation ?

Answer. A superman is spiritually a few inches taller than an ordinary man. An incarnation is a million miles higher. A superman once was a man, a most detestable being. An incarnation comes direct from the integral Personality of God.

Q. What is the meaning of spiritual tallness ? Are you joking ?

Answer. I am not joking. Man has no spiritual language, because he has no spiritual experience. The spirit has not yet descended upon him to transform him into a superman. Only a few chosen men have spiritual experience, and that too is so spasmodic, sporadic and deceptive that it is impossible to construct a language out of it. Further, two chosen men never have precisely the same experience. Man is bound by time and space, number and quantity. His consciousness is limited. Spiritual experience is not limited by these handicaps. Its only defect is that it cannot find expression, while its heart overflows, and the consequence is that it does not speak but stammers in man's own language, which is an infra-spiritual language. The expression is necessarily inadequate, and liable to misunderstanding. True messages appear as false, and fabricated messages sometimes appear as true.

Q. Can you explain this by an illustration or analogy ?

Answer. Suppose the message is "James left Vienna with his wife" and it appears as "James bha na hoite satrik jatra kariachhilen". You are bound to accept

that an unmarried man may have a wife, when it comes from spiritual experience for the latter can never go wrong. Logic or no logic, it must be accepted as true. Similarly man's laughter becomes manslaughter. God's word becomes God's sword.

Q. How to distinguish between a true message and a false message ?

Answer. As a general test I may mention that an ornamental, rhetorically adorned expression issues out of a false message. A true message is direct, dignified, didactic, dictatorial.

Q. You mean to say Aurobindo's messages are all false and fabricated ?

Answer. Yes, I do mean it. His messages are beautifully fabricated. They are argumentative, persuasive, pleasant, plastic, poetic. Dr. Tagore is superior, but his fabrications have less sustaining power. In the Hibbert Lectures he said, "My religion is founded upon spiritual experience, but it is a poet's religion". Next to **"The Religion of Man"** stands **"The Riddle of this world"**.

Q. Who was the first man to have religious experience ?

Answer. History is silent, from impotence, on this vital point in the life of religion. The privilege to see ghosts lies at the root of this supra-physical phenomenon. This privilege is often supposed to be divinely bestowed

upon a chosen few. It is sometimes an acquired right. After all, the distinction is unmeaning. God only consecrates and sanctifies the acquired right. He chooses the holder after he has acquired the right.

Spiritual experience seems to be as old as human consciousness, which is divisible into waking and sleeping consciousness. Sleep is of two kinds, sound sleep and superficial sleep. Spiritually the latter is more fertile. Superficial sleep is caused by neurotic disturbances. Personal unsuccess in life and famine, pestilence and war are potent causes of superficial sleep. The bereaved mother is privileged to see ghosts. The unemployed intellectual is privileged to have spiritual experience. The emotion of fear is specially associated with it. It is the last Elixir for neurotic hopelessness.

Ramkrishna began to have superficial sleep and its child, spiritual experience, when, having failed to find a more suitable employment, he was compelled to become a *Pujari* in a temple, the most graceless occupation for a brahmin. It is, in its inner truth, a disingenuous exploitation of the supreme power for the comfort of the despicable ego, whose death is constantly contemplated by all devout souls. "The ego in all its chains must be sacrificed before the noble truth of the freedom of the Self can be realized".

Q. What caused Aurobindo to select Pondicherry for his residence ?

Answer. Unsuccessful in his political adventures, and apprehensive of further molestations offered by the State, Aurobindo vainly sought for sound sleep and transposed himself to Pondicherry. But the fear of molestation increased with the want of occupation, for he was a most active man, a dynamic political spirit, during the best years of his life. This fear was the root cause of his spiritual experience. Addiction to this Elixir, once tasted, becomes imperative in a short time ; and no way out is left for the privileged victim. When the Ego ceases to give trouble, and the reconquest of the divine power of money becomes unnecessary for personal ends, the spirit becomes strong enough to keep the Ego under good control. Its army of *Ripus* are chained, and its political aspirations are bound in fetters. Metaphysical speculations receive free play in the meditation room, where the silence of the Transcendental reigns supreme. They naturally become noisy by the intoxication of spiritual experience, and God and His creation become foot-balls, kicked from the opposite goals of Reality and Appearance, potentiality and actuality, divinity and humanity, joy and sorrow, infinity and finitude, eternity and duration, amorphism and morphism, power and imbecility, lordship and *anisatwa*, alertness and self-forgetfulness, wisdom and stupidity, love and loathing for the *lila*, evolution and *yoga*, will and order, cyclicism and progressism, final realization and complete involution in dirty matter.

Q. Was the fear of molestation the cause of Aurobindo's spiritual experiences ?

Answer. That was the original cause, but subsequently his success in winning praise, in passing himself as an incarnation, added strength, courage and divine heroism to his spiritual experiences.

XXVII.

Q. **W**HAT is the acid test by which we can definitely distinguish between an incarnation and a medium ?

Answer. We can do so by the manner of their birth and death and also their life. They must all be immaculate. Birth without sexual intercourse, death without disease, and life without food-seeking habit are the signs of immaculateness. The Incarnation is immaculate in all three respects. The medium is an unlucky man, disgusted with life, human nature, social order, state molestation, and unsatisfied ambition, with an aspirant soul, and a consciousness that can test the flexibility of the supreme will by preposterous prayer, can humanize and dehumanize God at pleasure. The Incarnation is born by his own will. The medium is born unclean, lives unclean life for a number of years and then attracts divine attention by his failure in life.

Q. The incarnation dies by his own will. Does he commit suicide ?

Answer. No, having fulfilled his mission he goes back whence he came. He throws out his duality and becomes one again. The incarnation pretends to be man : the medium pretends to be God.

Q. What is your opinion about Christ, Goswami and Ramkrishna ?

Answer. The birth of Christ was immaculate. His death would have been immaculate if he had not cried "*Eli Eli sabuch thani*". His life would have been immaculate if he had not scourged the money-changers. There he failed to fulfil the law, laid down by himself, of good returned for evil. As to the birth of Goswami and Ramkrishna I think it beneath my dignity as a rational being to discuss about it. Their biographers will be hanged for felony at the gate of heaven if they try to enter it. They pretended to have known about their birth by intuitive experience. It is this kind of experience that induced Aurobindo to abandon the overmental zone to the mercy of daityas, little gods and positively hostile beings, whose vocation is to create confusion in *yoga* and lead sadhaks astray. (Pp 56-57, **The Riddle of this World**).

Q. Why do Christians allege that Christ was the son of David ? Joseph's claim to be the father of Christ is based solely upon the fact that he was the husband of Mary. (Mathew, chapter I, verse 16). Is it not a misfortune to be known as the husband of one's wife ?

Answer. Can you tell me why Yudhisthir, Bhim and Arjun are called Pandavas ? Did they carry in their veins a drop of Pandu's blood ? To call them Pandavas is a clandestine endeavour to pitchfork the law of heredity into the law of rebirth. The Pandavas had no right to the throne of Hastinapur, and Krishna by supporting that right brought disgrace upon Divine truth. Jesus as the son of David is a case of false atavism, and the case of Yudhisthir is a misrepresentation of the law of heredity. It shows that heredity and inheritance are two distinct things.

XXVIII.

Q. **W**ITH all your harangues about Aurobindo's philosophy I am not convinced that he is such an inveterate humbug as you represent him to be. I do not deny that there is some zigzaggery in it, but I can not equate it with humbuggery. Can you discover the secret which induced him to inform people at the eleventh hour that he was going to bring down an unmanifested supermind and not the existing one, as all along promised by him, which was sending glimpses from above the overmental zone ?

Answer. There were several reasons for changing his mind. A stupendous and unexpected change of consciousness had overtaken him. He had only a man's

consciousness when he promised to bring down the glimpsing supermind. His promise was clear : "There have been glimpses of the supermind till now ; but it has not been brought down in the consciousness of the Earth and fixed there. To so bring it down is the aim of our *joga*". (p1, **The Riddle**). Who can mistake the nature of the supermind to be brought down ? His second promise runs thus : "My aim is to bring down a yet unmanifested power, such as a supermind. I have to bring it down from the unmanifested Transcendence, which I must reach and realize". (p78. **The Riddle**). No sane man can make a confusion between the two superminds. Your question shows that your mind is clear and free from clouds. I shall now give the reasons for the change.

(1) There was not much credit in bringing down the manifested supermind, which was bound to descend in due course of evolution, for "supermind will descend to create a superman race". (p8, *Lights on yoga*). It was to descend like life and mind which had already created plants, animals and men. The creation of superman will follow as a matter of course.

Does any man take personal credit for the possession of extraordinary power by affirming, "To morrow morning I shall lift the Sun above the horizon in the East and move it round westward and send it down below the horizon in the evening" ? Does any body assert with pride, "I shall raise the level of the water on the day of the full moon" ? "I shall compel the Nor'wester to come in April". "I shall bring down thunder from Heaven

when the next cyclone happens". "I shall cause the rivers to flow in Summer by thawing the glaciers". "I shall weaken the dog by keeping it without food for a week".

Secondly, Aurobindo at first had no idea that he would be regarded as an incarnation of God. To confirm and fulfil what his sadhaks and gentlemen of the outside world endowed with a flexible will-to-believe, had come to think of him, he thought it necessary to pretend that he was in direct communication with the Transcendental Divine and could induce the latter to accede to any *Abdur* (mischievous and impossible request) that he might make ; for he was "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh", his very self and reality masquerading as man.

Q. Is pretending a good thing for an incarnation ?
If detected, is he not likely to be stoned to death ?

Answer. I am surprised you do not know that pretension is the fundamental feature in the character of the Divine. It is not confined to Indian religious philosophy. When Christ on the Cross cried out, "Father, hast Thou forsaken me ?", did he not pretend that the crucifixion was not a prearranged business ? Krishna was nothing if he was not a pretender. His whole life is replete with pretences. Aurobindo affirms with divine pride, "I am not ignorant. I am not bound. I am not sorrowful : I only play at being ignorant, I only pretend to be bound ; like an actor or like an audience I only take the *rasa* of sorrow. I can throw it off when I please".

Is this not transcendently heroic ? To pretend that one is pretending is only possible for the Divine.

Pretension is an honourable thing. The *Lila* is a pretension. Creation itself is a pretension. The three aspects of God are pretensions. The various kinds of consciousnesses are pretensions. The transformation of spirit into matter and the retransformation are both pretensions. The duality of Soul and Ego is a pretension. The whole world is a pretension from beginning to end. It is a huge masquerade, sanctified by the name of *LILA*.

Q. This lecture has considerably enlarged and enhanced my consciousness. I now understand spiritual philosophy with greater clearness than before. Have you any other reason to explain why Aurobindo changed his mind with regard to the bringing down of the two kinds of supermind ? Why did he change his will ?

Answer. Yes, Thirdly, the existing supermind may be confused with a "liberated soul". Aurobindo himself had made the confusion when he said, "The divine soul (liberated soul) reproduces itself in similar liberated souls as the animal reproduces itself in similar bodies" (p304, **Eastern Lights**). This confusion was a sort of confession of weakness and anticipated failure. Entire humanity could never be supramentalized in this biological fashion. To Aurobindo the thought of reassuring his sadhaks by telling them that he would bring down an unmanifested supermind was natural, though cleverly inspired—a supermind which could in the twinkling of an eye illuminate

the Earth like the rising Sun in the morning. The ordinary Sun disappears in the evening, but the supramental Sun would shed light unceasingly to the end of Eternity, and make the Earth better than Heaven. Fourthly, the liberated soul is after all a man, a *jibanmukta purusha*, living in society very much like ordinary men, and hardly distinguishable from them. It is a stale thing in spiritual life. There is nothing unique about it. The ideal itself is low. It was not likely to capture the hearts of his sadhaks. It lost its charm steadily as the idea of his being an incarnation of God spread among them. The truth is that Aurobindo has been completely upset by the intoxicating consciousness that he is probably an incarnation of God, and he feels the necessity of showing something to his sadhaks worthy of himself as such an incarnation. He is now visiting the transcendental and cosmic God at pleasure in his spiritual experience, (Pp 78-79, **The Riddle**) which is nothing better than an intuition, identified by Dr. Tagore as imaginative emotion, and denounced by himself as half-truth.

Fifthly, seeing that he had failed to bring down the existing supermind with all the intensity of *yoga* that he could command—*yoga* which can accelerate evolution with victorious rapidity—he anticipated and gagged criticism by affirming that he was going to bring down the unmanifested supermind which is far superior to the existing one and that he was negotiating with the Transcendental God for the purpose by means of spiritual experience. His consciousness may be compared to

that of the fox who left the vineyard, saying that the grapes were sour.

XXVIII (a)

Q. **M**AY a liberated soul be again enslaved by the Ego ?

Answer. Certainly, it may ; and the chances are hundred to one that it will. The tendency to fall is stronger than the urge to rise. It is also more long-lived. Falling is our nature. Gravitation is our destiny. Dr. Sircar has discovered that there is "a constant tendency in God to become man." Aurobindo says there is a constant tendency in God to become matter. Dr. Tagore says God requires our collaboration to rise again.

But Dr. Sircar, to do him justice, also says, 'there is a constant tendency in man to become God'. Experience strongly contradicts the last view and it may be ascribed to a lapse of spiritual experience, for Dr. Sircar is a mystic of the overmental zone, so strongly infested by daityas and hostile beings that Aurobindo was compelled to seek for a "narrower but surer path" from intellectual falsehood to supramental truth. If the soul became self-forgetful once and fell to the bottom of the Black Sea of ignorance, idiocy and *ajnanam*, it may easily relapse into those bad habits again. The soul or supermind, even *Sachchidananda* himself is still romanti-

cally involved in the inconscience of matter, (P 8, *Lights on yoga*), crying for help from the supramental plane and the transcendental solitude to liberate itself. Consider the height from which the soul fell and compare it with that of the liberated soul (*jibanmukta*). Indeed, the liberated soul is only half-liberated, and its chance of falling again is very great. It lives a precarious life in a house built upon quick-sand.

In the *Satya Yuga* all souls were more or less free and fresh. These free souls, boldly sallying out of the imperial fort in Heaven in quest of adventure and conquest, ignominiously fell and fell and fell again till they came to the middle of the *Kali yuga*. (p83, *Yogic Sadhan*). 'The *satya yuga* will come again with' all the old souls liberated, and new and fresh souls added. They will fall again. There is no fighting against destiny. Gravitation works unceasingly. Souls cannot live in the sky. They require solid earth to stand upon.

Q. Then it seems useless to supramentalize humanity. They may fall to the human consciousness again ; and if one superman falls by chance, he will cause other supermen to fall by his example and probably by his precepts. It must be borne in mind also that most souls have not completed their experience yet and have not acquired the necessary qualification to claim the right to supramentalization. Aurobindo says, "The soul comes into birth for experience, for growth, for evolution till it can bring the Divine into matter." (p87, *The Riddle*).

Q. Is not God already involved in matter ? (P 8, *Lights on Yoga*).

Answer. There He is involved in principle ; now He will be personally brought into matter. He will be virtually transformed into matter, but the experience of man is not yet complete for that purpose. Hence the necessity of repeated rebirths.

Q. Then, you think most of mankind are not yet ripe enough to receive supramental light. How then can the whole of mankind be supramentalized ?

Answer. Aurobindo thinks his God alone knows the secret of propaganda work. He forgets that the Devil is a more competent propagandist. By Devil, I mean the creator of the Ego. It is silly to ask how this creator was created. It is enough to know that the Devil exists, whatever be the source from which he came. The existence of evil is doubted by no sane man ; and the Devil is the originator of evil.

If souls are sparks or psychic seeds thrown out by God for the *lila*, the Devil throws out egos in larger numbers and stronger in nature. Without them the souls would be useless in the game of the *lila*, which in the last analysis mean an everlasting war between souls and egos, between devas and asuras, between Aryans and Dravidians, between Greeks and barbarians, between Christians and Pagans, between mussalmans and kaffirs, between capitalists and labourers, between man

woman. God and Devil are in agreement in their concern for the *lila*, whatever their difference in other matters may be. When the liberated soul goes on reproducing itself in slave-souls will the latter look on helplessly ? The chance is that for every ten slave-souls liberated there will be one hundred liberated souls re-enslaved. Aurobindo is a rebel against God trying to supramentalize the world against His laws and ordinances. It is sheer misfortune to pretend that he is an incarnation. He was once a rebel against the British Government. He is now a rebel against God. He wanted to unite the people of Bengal to resist the British game of exploitation. Having failed he is now trying to unite humanity to resist Divine exploitation. Is not the *lila* a huge exploitation of helpless souls, created by the Divine Himself—a *lila* much vaster than what the British are playing in India ?

Q. But the British have not created the people of India in order to exploit them.

Answer. It is true they have not created the people of India; but they are deliberately increasing the population for the enrichment of the game. Creating a thing and enlarging it belong to the same category. God did not create or throw out all the souls at the same time (P80, **The Riddle**). He has been increasing the soul population of the Earth for His own satisfaction, and in recent years the rate of increase has been enormous, specially in the civilized parts of the Earth. The One who has transformed Himself into the Many must necessarily transform the

Many into the More; and humanity grow from more to more.

The British in India are following in the foot-steps of the Divine. Other nations have followed the British; and Italy under Mussolini is following all of them. All the civilized nations are now co-operating with God to make the *lila* increasingly successful.

Q. Does Aurobindo wish to put an end to the *lila*? "Is not the *lila* the very soul of reality for him"? (*Eastern Lights*). If he does not wish to put an end to the *lila*, what is the meaning of your intimation that Aurobindo is now a rebel against God in the same way as once he was one against the British Government in India?

Q. It is true Aurobindo does not wish to put an end to the *lila*, but he is determined to change the character of the *lila* against the will of God.

Q. What is the change he contemplates?

Answer. He wants to change the foundation of the *lila* from the intellectual to the supramental order of truth. He thinks or hopes the change will receive the *post facto* sanction of the Divine, for it seems so good to him. Since his shadhaks began to regard him as an incarnation of God he has been more and more confirmed in this hope. He is now a wilful, wayward, spoilt child of God doing things against His will in the hope that he will be able to bend the Divine will to his own. His

sadhaks fully believe him to be capable of bending it. They tell people that Aurobindo is following the will of God, not the present will but the prospective one which is more real and permanent than it. But outside people, specially the wandering sadhaks stupidly think that he is following the existing will of God.

Q. Then you mean to say that Aurobindo's present adventure is a mere bromide enlargement of the past. In the past he tried to unite Bengal, he is now trying to unite humanity. In the past he tried to bend the will of the British Government, he is now trying to bend the will of God. In the past he wanted to make the people of Bengal happy, he now wants to make humanity happy. In the past he wanted to anglicise the Bengalees, he now wants to divinize or supramentalize humanity.

Answer. There is the truth. People misread Aurobindo, because they are incapable of distinguishing between the present and the prospective will of the Divine. They think the will is immutable. That is a mistake. The Divine changed His will when He transformed Himself from the static, stagnant, inert, Transcendental into the active, dynamic, energetic Cosmic. What God did once He can do again.

Q. Are all devout humanists, who want to unite humanity, spiritual rebels against the Divine ?

Answer. I think they are, on the *lila* theory of creation. Most of them are atheists.

Q. Is unity of humanity ultimately impossible ?

Answer. You have misunderstood my meaning. Unity of humanity is impossible as long as God likes the *lila*. When He comes to loathe it, unity of humanity and unity of God and man will come automatically. We are playthings of God, not his co-operators. God will bundle up the balls and rackets when He ceases to get any pleasure by the game.

Q. How did the idea of co-operation with God arise in the devout mind of man ? It seems to be a most preposterous idea.

Answer. Co-operation is a new idea created by political and industrial civilization. The labourer is supposed to co-operate with the capitalist. The foot-soldier is supposed to co-operate with the commanding Officer. The sweeper co-operates with the house-holder. The bullock co-operates with the oil-presser. The slave co-operates with his master. The dog is the best co-operator in the animal kingdom. The tiger is a co-operator when it lives in the Zoo. The bear is a co-operator of the man who makes him dance for money. Are not the snake, the wasp, the microbes and all the tribes on our frontier co-operators of God ? Are they rebels against God ? Is it possible for any living being to rebel against the Almighty ?

Co-operation is a stupid idea. Co-operatton on a small and transient scale is not bad. It adds to the

beauty and richness of the *lila*. But co-operation enlarged beyond given limits is dangerous. Suppose all mankind, being annoyed by the overplus of pain and sorrow, synchronously committed suicide. Could the British government continue the India *lila*, if all the Indians united and committed suicide ?

Co-operators are apt to become non-co-operators. Who was a greater co-operator than Mahatma Gandhi before the Swaraj agitation ? Who was the greatest non-co-operator during the agitation ? I would ask all decent men to beware of the megalomania of co-operatorship. Co-operators of the Divine Government of the universe ! What a preposterous idea ! Man may be greater than what he appears to be. But to think of him as a co-operator of God, a friendly rival of God is to anticipate the possible dethronement of God. Dr. Tagore first became a collaborator of God and next expelled Him out of Man's Universe as a useless, expensive appendage of human society. Man owes his civilization to the fact that lions and tigers never thought of ethnological unity, and never tried to co-operate either with man or among themselves.

Q. Is it reasonable to call Aurobindo a rebel against God ? He has given his *sadhaks* a good chapter on the value of surrender to the will of God. (*Lights on Yoga* pp 47-81).

Answer. Don't speak to me of his surrender. It is all sham. A man who surrenders himself genuinely

to God can never find honour and glory in personal consummation, or as he calls it "divinely individual consummation". His surrender is subject to heavy reservations. He safeguards his individuality with unspiritual meticulousness. He makes his surrender to the Divine on condition that the Divine Mother will co-operate with him in bringing down all the transcendental light, power, wideness, peace, purity, truth-consciousness and *ananda* of the supramental Divine. (P47, **Lights on Yoga**). When he says, 'The Divine gives Itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine', he speaks nonsense. What he wants is a mutual surrender, a compromise, a bargain. Man surrenders himself to God when God promises to surrender Himself to man. Neither loses his personality, his individuality, his self-consciousness, his *ahankar*. No, this is no self-surrender at all. Surrender must be surrender at discretion. Aurobindo's surrender is a pact, a treaty, a covenant, an *entente cordiale*, a bilateral agreement. He is too proud to think of complete surrender. He is prepared to scratch God in the back if God is prepared to scratch him similarly. He is prepared to give one hundred pounds to God if the latter will give him two hundred pounds first. That is the kind of surrender he speaks of.

What I mean to say is that he is a rebel against God in the sense in which a spoilt child is a rebel against his father. He wants to take full advantage of the soft

sentiments of the Divine. He wants to correct not himself but God. He wants Him to change His will to gratify his whims. Self-surrender means surrender of self-consciousness. It means self-nonentitization, and not mere humility, deceitful submission or modesty. His supramentalized snobbishness is too great for self-surrender in the human sense. Why should an incarnation of God surrender himself to God? Is not that mean? What will his sadhaks think if he fully surrenders himself to God? To surrender oneself to one's own self is a queer idea. Aurobindo wants his sadhaks to surrender themselves to him and to him alone. Sadhaks surrender themselves to Aurobindo even before they know what he teaches. That is real surrender. It is founded upon faith, blind and dumb faith, which is true faith, untarnished by speculative light.

XXVIII (b).

Q. CAN you explain to me how it is that, while man experiences both pleasure and pain in the *lila*, God finds only pure *ananda* in it?

Answer. What is your object in asking this question? Do you want that God also should experience both pleasure and pain or do you want that man should experience nothing but pleasure in the *lila*?

Q. I am explicitly wanting neither. I want to know what has caused this difference.

Answer. What is your idea? Do you want that difference should disappear from the face of the Earth? Do you want that there should be no difference between one man and another, and none between God and man?

Q. Suppose I wanted the abolition of all manner of differences.

Answer. Then the *Lila* would disappear, the cosmic God or "Goddess would withdraw the world into Herself and withdraw Herself into the Transcendental".

Q. Anyhow the existence of pain, sorrow, evil, weakness, jars on my ear as an anomaly in a universe created by a decent Divine Being. It outrages my sense of decency.

Answer. "These are not universal or eternal things, but local and temporary, local mainly of this Earth, temporary in the brief periods of the *kali yuga*". (p 83, **Yogic Sadhan**). *Kali yuga* is a short period and the Earth is but a speck of dust. Are you so fastidious that you cannot bear this insignificant imperfection? You can not look at the Universe in its wholeness. God's duty is to minimise evil, and not to abolish it, and to see that the world does not suffer in its wholeness.

Q. If God entertains this idea of minimization He is not a perfect God.

Answer. God is both perfect and imperfect, boundless and bounded, good and bad. Our duty is to see that the imperfection, the limitations and the Evil in God do not exceed a given limit—the permissible limit. You must take the lean with the fat. However, the problem is unsolved and constitutes the Riddle of this World, the submarine rock on which religious metaphysics finds itself dashed, shattered, wrecked, marooned in the sea of intellectualism. When the supermind descends the solution will come automatically. Light, light alone can solve the problem. Heliotropism is almost epidemic in humanity. We want light, more light, still more light, unbounded light. Light is life. Light is our salvation. Aurobindo's distinctive feature is that he wants supramental light, a higher light than intuitive or intellectual or instinctive light. He wants light at any cost. He is prepared to die for light. Light is the panacea for all evil. Science has brought us unimaginable comforts of life. The heliotropism of Metaphysics will bring us unbounded joy or *ananda*. It will make both morality and immorality impossible. Pain and pleasure will both go, courage and cowardice will both disappear, staticity and dynamicity will lose their difference. All contradictions, dualities, oppositions, contrariness, antitheses, antinomies, disharmonies, anomalies will become things of the past. We have passed half of Eternity in misery, suffering and weakness and contradictions and paradoxes. The next half will bring us unlimited, untarnished, immaculate joy and delight, *ananda* and bliss and beatitude. Beauty alone will remain divorced from ugliness. Goodness will be dissociated from evil. Truth will be

detached from falsehood. The Penal Code will be repealed and thrown into the waste-paper basket. There will be spirit without matter, soul without ego, God without the Devil, Heaven without Earth.

Q. Can you tell me how matter came into existence ?

Answer. Matter represents the product of the excretive activity of the Divine. The Earth was formed in the same way as the Penguin Island was formed. Excreted matter dropped from above like rain on a particular part of universal space and this came to be known under the name of the Earth. Excreted matter has value as a fertilizer. The Earth has been so long fertile for ignorance and evil. Supramental light will clear them out and the fertility of the Earth will manifest itself in all that we conceive to be good, beautiful and true. The misfortune is that goodness, beauty and truth are bad bed-fellows.

XXIX.

Q. **S**OME philosophers maintain that the two worlds are not spatially separated, that Heaven already exists on Earth and that the best men (*Jibanmukta pürushas*) live in Heaven though they are residents of the Earth. What does Aurobindo think of this view of Heaven and Earth ?

Answer. Aurobindo is never attached to any particular view for any length of time. His consciousness is unceasingly evolving. Views are not beings but becomings for his consciousness. There was a time when he believed in the existence of the *Jibanmukta purusha*. He called him 'liberated soul'. But he has now found that a *jibanmukta purusha* is a living paradox, a complete self-contradiction in terms. The truly liberated soul is a soul liberated from the body, life and mind, which together constitute the ego of man. A *Jibanmukta purusha* is a person to whom life is still attached—life in all its forms, viz. animal, economic, aesthetic and intellectual life. He may be regarded as a half-truth at best. The aim of the ordinary man is to strengthen all these forms of life. The *Jibanmukta purusha* tries to weaken them but he is not fully emancipated from them. Heaven would be immensely reduced in value, if the *Jibanmukta purusha* were supposed to live in it. He lives somewhere between the Earth and Heaven, but very close to the first. His dwelling place is a few feet above the Earth. His stature is a few inches taller than that of the average man.

Aurobindo has now given up the idea of the liberated soul as the ideal for which he seeks. He seeks for the supermind which is much higher than the liberated soul. The latter can reproduce liberated souls on the same level as itself, as an animal can reproduce other animals on the same level of quality. Complete achievement of the liberation of all human souls by this biological method is of course impossible. But even if it were possible what

would be its value.? The Supermind is a million miles above the fiberated soul. The Superman has completely detached himself from the Ego. The *Jibanmukta* is still attached to it. The Superman enjoys the triumph of victory and conquest. The *Jibanmukta* is struggling for escape in half-hearted hope.

No, I am particularly certain that in his present state of consciousness Aurobindo is definitely opposed to the view that heavenly life and earthly life are or can be mixed up in one world. We are bound by our human consciousness to separate heaven from earth spatially. Some people are fond of comparing heaven to West End of London and the East End to hell. They seem to think that Heaven, Hell and Earth are all existing in this world. This view is of course wrong. The earth has a complicated structure. Heaven is a simple land—a land of bliss. On earth the soul and the ego are mixed up. In heaven there is no ego. The ego can find no admittance there. When all the souls now living on earth have returned to heaven, the egos will remain in it, and the *lila* will attain perfection in self-destruction. The League of Nations is a conference of egos and no souls. There are strong egos and weak egos, but they are all egos. In spite of what I have said above complete replacement of earth by heaven is the object of Aurobindo's *yoga*.

XXX.

Q. **W**HAT is the difference between Evolution and *Lila* ?

Answer. Evolution represents the design and plan made by the Divine architect. *Lila* represents the actual building. Evolution is the thought behind the creation of the world.

Q. Is the building a mere materialised copy of the plan ? Is it an exact verification of the plan ?

Answer. Yes, in its wholeness the building is a replica or copy of the plan. But there may be differences of detail. Where the architect contemplates the use of first class bricks the workmen may give third class. Japanese cement may be used for Whiteman's, one inch screw for one and half inch, Tata's steel for Birmingham, Hansaplast for leukoplast, and so forth. Among these the screw is very important. We often hear of a screw being loose somewhere. Nearly all the screws of the world seem to have gone loose and it is now said to be out of joint.

Q. Does God approve or acquiesce in these differences ?

Answer. He does not approve. But He has to acquiesce to a certain extent. But when the *lila* goes wrong in essential elements God has to interfere.

Q. How does He interfere ?

Answer. He either incarnates Himself visibly or descends invisibly in some centre and selects a medium. Krishna and Christ were strictly speaking not incarnations. It is an untruth to affirm that Ramkrishna and Aurobindo are incarnations or mediums.

Q. Have the supposed incarnations and mediums ever fully succeeded in their missions ?

Answer. Everybody knows that they have all failed. Both Krishna and Christ left the world worse than they found it. Ramkrishna had a spiritual mission, but in his death-bed he left word to turn it into an economic mission—a mischievous humanitarian mission, which exploits those who have in order to help those who have not. The result is that those who are exploited are impoverished and those who are helped are becoming more helpless. God-fearing men are exploited and god-loving men are helped. The number of god-loving men is increasing so fast that the *lila* is showing signs of collapse, and the world is slowly fulfilling itself by self-destruction. Aurobindo's mission is to supramentalize the world. There are unmistakable signs that he will leave it in an abyss of darkness, illusion, and superstition. Other prophets deceived fools and ignoramuses. Aurobindo is deceiving learned men, muddled by university degrees. The exploitation of credulity is the profession of the prophet, and credulity is not cured by college education.

XXXI.

Q. **W**HAT is the difference between spiritual experience and intuitive vision ?

Answer. They mean one and the same thing. They are products of meditation, which is called *yoga* in Indian philosophy.

Q. When Aurobindo says he has discovered by spiritual experience that "he will have to reach and realise the unmanifest Transcendental in order to bring down the unmanifested supermind", does he mean that he foresaw the process by intuitive vision ?

Answer. He can mean nothing else. He cannot mean that he foresaw it supramentally, for he had not reached and realized the existing supermind, though he may have seen flickering glimpses of it.

Q. But Aurobindo condemns intuitive vision as half-truth. Does he not ?

Answer. He does not absolutely condemn it. He warns his sadhaks against the dangers of intuitive vision, as they are inexperienced young men. It is quite possible he has overcome those dangers, and overpowered the daityas and hostile beings who lead ordinary sadhaks astray ; he thinks himself too strong for them now. Instead of being led astray by the daityas he is himself leading astray his sadhaks, whom he deprives of their reason before he sacrifices them on the altar of Aurobindoism.

Q. Has Aurobindo anywhere mentioned that he has overpowered or circumvented the daityas ?

Answer. No, he has not mentioned it anywhere. But I guess he has defeated them temporarily ; for, where else can he be now, if not in the intuitive zone ?

Q. Is it not possible that by spiritual experience he means experience gained in the "narrow but surer passage," which directly leads from intellectualism to supramentalism as mentioned at page 66 of **"The Riddle of this World"**.

Answer. It is quite possible. But it is more probable that the spiritual experience has been gained by the fire of faith, which is more powerful than any ascertained and indubitable light of knowledge". (p. 108, **The Riddle**).

Q. If that be the case I shall have no difficulty in asserting that Aurobindoism and humbugism and mesmerism and diabolonianism and Neo-tantric dynamism are all one and the same.

Answer. I am glad you have come at last to recognize the soul of truth concealed in the deepest recesses of the heart, the quintessence, of Aurobindoism.

Q. I have now found the quintessence of Aurobindo's philosophy and I thank you heartily for the same. Aurobindo has failed to solve the riddle of this world, but you have succeeded in solving the riddle of Aurobindo's philosophy. May your adventures in the quest of truth ever succeed like those of "The Black Girl", immortalized by Bernard Shaw, who went out in quest of God and found Him in an Irishman, who was compelled to marry her and to provide her with a number of frisky piccanninies,—the final self-realization of womanhood.

Now, my last question is this: Has Aurobindo abandoned his intellect in his quest of the supermind ?

Answer. No, he has strictly followed the old precept, "Don't throw out your dirty water until you get in your clean". But his Sadhaks are fool enough to throw away their intellectual light, their mental vision in the hope that this will enable them more quickly to obtain supramental light. It does not seem he intends to follow the other old precept which runs thus : "This also I say unto you that when you get your fresh water you must throw out the dirty, and be particularly careful not to let the two get mixed". Dr. M. N. Sircar says that his mind is elastic enough to hold both of them. This has enabled him to become an incarnation of charlatanism and to deceive without detection. The untruth of intellectualism finely mingled with the unverifiable truth of supramentalism has made him a transcendental thinker and a thoughtful visionist.

XXXII.

Q. I am thankful to you for the clear analysis you have given of Aurobindo's philosophy founded upon the distinctive psychology of Divine dynamism, human stupidity and the unity of mankind as an intermediate ideal slowly leading to final realization. But you have given me no clear idea of supramental light,

supermind and superman. Is supermind the mind of the superman ? Can the superman have both supermind, and human mind ?

Answer. There are three races of man, (1) human (2) superman and (3) a cross between the two, euphemistically, but erroneously called 'transitional' man.

Q. Suppose a man in transition towards supermind stops short mid-way, can you still call him a transitional man ?

Answer. No, he is neither a man nor a superman. He is like the mule, neither an ass nor a horse. That is a case of arrested Evolution.

Q. Do Aurobindo and his disciples belong to the transitional race ?

Answer. Evidently, they do belong to it. They will be sorry to be regarded as men, and it will be an untruth to regard them as supermen. They are men with a double consciousness. They are men of truth and untruth at the same time. They have a double self-consciousness. They regard themselves as men and supermen at the same time. They enjoy *ananda* and pain of cold and rheumatism at the same time. For them Earth is Heaven, and Heaven is Earth. Heaven is brought down on Earth and the Earth is lifted to the height of Heaven without much difficulty. At all events they are neither men nor supermen, who belong to two distinct races. They are like Anglo-Indians who are loathed by Englishmen and hated by Indians.

Q. Do men and supermen belong to distinct races ?

Answer. Aurobindo himself makes this affirmation with great emphasis.

Q. I now understand why Aurobindoism is so cloudy. The title of your book has been selected with divine insight. The Anglo-Indian has three self-consciousnesses viz., (1) as an Englishman, (2) as an Indian and (3) as an Anglo-Indian ; and so have Aurobindo and his followers. But is there no difference between Aurobindo's consciousness and that of his followers ?

Answer. Certainly, there is a great difference between the two. There is difference also between the consciousness of one follower and another.

Q. Is differentiation of consciousness an essential factor in the unification of humanity, that is, the unity of human consciousness ?

Answer. There is no construction without destruction. Disruption is an essential condition of integration, and the longer the disruption lasts, the higher is the level of integration finally achieved.

Q. How long is the disruption caused by Aurobindoism likely to last ?

Answer. Dr. M. N. Sircar thinks it will be eternal. Aurobindo is uncertain. But if the biological method of diffusing supramental light is followed, the disruption will grow for about a million years, and then it may or may not begin to decline.

Q. Then good-bye to Aurobindoism and his unity of humanity, in spite of all his transcendental, cosmic and glimpsing supramental experiences. I am now convinced that Aurobindo's philosophy is a coagulated clot of confusion. I am convinced also that civilization would have utterly disrupted humanity, that is, human consciousness, but for the fact that races of men are being continually annihilated by the law of the survival of the fittest. Much progress towards the unity of humanity is likely to result from the annihilation of the Abyssinian race by Mussolini. A definite block of consciousness and self-consciousness will be extinguished, unless economic civilization stands in the way of spiritual civilization. Italy will probably want black workers to help in the progress of Italian industrial civilization, and that will hamper the progress of spiritual unification, that is unification of consciousness. Aurobindo as the unifier of humanity would like the Abyssinian race to be annihilated, but as the reconquerer of the divine power of money he cannot forget that the extermination of that race will for the time being reduce the magnitude of that divine power. That which increases wealth increases also velocity of supramentalization, and vice versa. Material wealth and spiritual wealth are interchangeable. The first can be psychicised and the second physicised at convenience. Dr. M. N. Sircar has rightly said that spirit and matter have no difference for Aurobindo. Shapelessness and shapelessness have no difference for Ramkrishna. Light and delight have no difference for Holy men. Money and meditation are interchangeable means to an end. Both help the supramental way of life (P 21, **Mother**).

XXXIII.

Q. **R**ADHAKRISHNAN says, "Cognitive experience is produced in three ways, which are sense experience, discursive reasoning and intuitive apprehension". But these do not include supramental light. Is supramental light a new discovery to be made by Aurobindo ?

Answer. Certainly, Aurobindo has not yet discovered it, any more than Columbus had discovered land on the other side of the Atlantic before the actual expedition started from Barcelona. He had only conceived the possibility of the existence of land across the Atlantic. Aurobindo has acute sense experience, broad discursive reasoning and lofty intuitive apprehension, but none of these enables anybody to have experience of supramental consciousness. What Columbus discovered was after all land, which can be known by sense experience. Here lies the difference between the adventures of the two.

Q. Cannot intuitive apprehension have experience of supramental light ?

Answer. No, it cannot. Supramental light is an instrument of vision, and is different from intuitive apprehension, not merely in degree, but in kind. Conversion is necessary. Intuitive light cannot convert itself into supramental light any more than sense experience can convert itself into intuitive apprehension. Sense experience cannot convert itself even into discursive reasoning. The latter requires something more than mere sense experience—and that 'more' is inaccessible to sense experience.

Q. How did philosophers discover intuitive apprehension ?

Answer. The actual experience of intuitive knowledge preceded the discovery of the intuitive faculty. The intuitive faculty may, for aught anybody knows, be a mere figment. There are philosophers who do not admit its existence ; and those who admit it are tremendously divided in their opinion as to its character. More than half of Dr. Radhakrishnan's "**Idealist View of Life**" is devoted to the exposition of the different kinds of intuition supported by different philosophers. Radhakrishnan thinks intuition is an activity of the whole being. Aurobindo thinks supramental light can be had only by eliminating most of that being. The mind itself must be eliminated, if it is intended to have the supermind. The mind and the supermind cannot dwell in the same personality.

Q. What then is your opinion about the supermind ?

Answer. I have already repeated a hundred times that supermind is a figment, a fabrication, an invention made by one who is disgusted by the uncertainties of intuitive experience. Aurobindo has shewn that intuition gives experience of half-truths. I think it will be found that supramental light discloses quarter-truths. Philosophers have not yet begun to study the problem of supramental light, either in the East or in the West. Criticism will take a century to come, if it comes at all.

For a century or so supramental light will be simply ignored. Nobody will think it worth while to scrutinise it. Supramental light will probably vanish with Aurobindo's death.

Q. If the elimination of the mind is an essential condition for the advent of the supermind, what will bring down the supermind ?

Answer. There lies the beauty of the discovery. The mind is to bring down the supermind. It seems when the supermind has descended a long way and has nearly come in contact with the mind, the latter will commit suicide and disappear. Those who bring the bride-groom disappear from the '*Basarghar*', before actual contact between the couple happens.

Q. Aurobindo says that the mind will have to be strengthened in order to bring down the supermind. Will it not be better to weaken the mind for the purpose ?

Answer. There again is the beauty of Aurobindo's philosophy. Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar thinks that the supermind will come to the neighbourhood of the mind, weaken it with the help of treacherous emissaries and then give battle to it and vanquish it and strangle it to death. This is a most romantic account of the suppression of the mind by the supermind. He thinks also that the stronger the mind, the easier for the supermind to descend upon man. The mind does not show its strength by

opposing the supermind but by helping it to descend, and by strangling itself. Strength means a strong will-to-death or will-to-self-annihilation.

XXXIV.

Q. **T**HE relation between religious idealism and citizenship has been so far ignored by prophets and philosophers. Life in this world is generally supposed to be too insignificant to call for any genuine notice. To me this seems to be a mistake, specially for Indian philosophers—believers in repeated rebirths. *Yoga*, no doubt, can reduce the number of rebirths, but to qualify oneself for *yoga* one must have passed through thousands of rebirths. Clearly, a considerable part of Eternity is passed by man in this world, and the joys and sorrows of life in it are by no means negligible. Indeed, it is the sorrows that create the urge towards the other world or rather away from this world. I wish to know the views of Aurobindo on this subject.

Answer. Aurobindo wants to destroy this world, at least, to eliminate from it its distinctive elements, and virtually to replace it by a world superior to the other world. The other world is called supramental world. The supramental world which Aurobindo wants to bring down is yet unmanifested, but supposed to be superior to the existing supramental, because it will be a

"triumphant new self-discovery of the Divine". (p 15.

Riddle). In this world man will be a superman, and not merely a "liberated soul". The superman will neither eat nor reproduce the race. Seeing that malnutrition and excessive and uneugenic reproduction are the primary sources of sorrows, we can easily count upon a happier life in the new supramental world.

Q. But that kind of life cannot be called earthly life ?

Answer. Aurobindo will retain the name, though he will change the substance of the Earth. The Nawab of Murshidabad is not dead, though he lives a different kind of life from Aliverdi Khan.

Q. But man will be called superman in the new world ?

Answer. Why bother about the name ? Superman is a man with superior qualities. When the existing race is completely exterminated, there will perhaps be no valid objection to changing the name superman race into the human race. What is there in a name ? The rose called by another name would smell as sweet as it does now.

Q. What is the good of bringing down the unmanifested supermind on Earth ? Would it not be better to improve and enlarge the existing supramental world ?

Answer. The supramental world is one hundred and ninetytwo million miles from the Earth. To be saved

from the troubles of making this journey is no trifle. We shall have Heaven at home, and no transfirmamental migration will be necessary. Is not that a great gain ?

Q. For the liberated spirit distance is of no consequence. Isn't it so ?

Answer. The liberated spirit is a spirit that is liberated from the burden of body, life and mind. It is not liberated from the encumbrance of Time and Space.

Q. Why does not Aurobindo eliminate Time and Space also from the supramental world ?

Answer. The time is not yet ripe for it ; and there is too much empty space still in the universe to warrant the annihilation of space. When the entire universe is congested, it will be time to consider that question.

Q. Let alone the problem of Time and Space. Is it not possible to improve the condition of this world by readjustment of social forces and reintegration of human personality ?

Answer. I think it will be much easier to dispense with time and space than to make the world peaceful by integration, consolidation, Versailles Treaty or League of Nations. I think it will be much easier to extinguish sorrow by extermination of humanity than to improve the nature of man—his individual nature, his communal nature, his national nature, his human nature. For Aurobindo Nature says, "I am comfortable, I do not wish to have any change". (p 18, **Yogic Sadhan**). Of all kinds

of nature the nature of Civilization is the most conservative ; for civilization is based upon natural laws, and if these laws were changed, Man, spirit, soul, ego, mind, life and God would become a huge welter, an abysmal quandary from which there could possibly be no escape. Even Aurobindo admits it up to a certain point. Take for instance the law of Evolution. This law is unchangeable in the lower levels of consciousness. In the higher levels also soul-force can accelerate its speed but cannot change its nature. Nature is stronger than will-force. Aurobindo has no doubt made a confusion between nature-force and will-power, but even he has not succeeded in carrying it to the chaos of unity. So long as will and order both remain in existence, fighting each other fiercely, there can be no peace, no *ananda*, no bliss. In the West man is engaged is poisoning the will-to-death. In the East we are vainly trying to dispense with order—the order prescribed by the laws of Nature. Here lies the real difference between the East and the West. Take for instance the case of the Abyssinian war. Mussolini is following human nature and the nature of gun-powder and mustard gas. The League of Nations is following the sham of "will". No wonder it has failed. Anthony Eden is naturally angry. Aloisi is chuckling with equal naturalness. Reform the world by all means, but don't try to interfere with Nature,—external nature, human nature divine nature, the nature of wasps, snakes and microbes.

Q. Cannot the nature of the Carnivores, such as, the lion, the tiger and the grizzly be changed ? How was the nature of the Herbivores changed by domestication ?

Answer. You are quite mistaken. The herbivores have not changed their nature. They have only transferred their allegiance from the quadrupedal to the bipedal carnivores. The Hindus have changed their allegiance from Islamic to Christian carnivores. They have not changed their Vedantic nature, their will-to-death-principle of life, their Nirvana. Aurobindo has tried to change it by the extermination of the human race, and by overlaying it with a superior race and has failed most ignominiously.

XXXV.

Q. I have been particularly struck by a sentence at page 4 of **'The Teaching and the Asram'**. It runs thus :— "All depends on the teacher and ends with his life-time, unless there is another teacher who can take his place". Is not Aurobindo an incarnation of God ? Is he not even a superman ? Does he not at least expect to be a superman before his death ? Why does the writer gloomily anticipate the closing down of the Asram ? Is Aurobindoism a fleeting show of the hour ?

Answer. I am glad you have at length come to realize the truth about the *Yogasram* at Pondicherry and Aurobindo's prophethood and philosophy. I have already told you that he is a humbug. He will fill the world with supermen in the same way as a cow fills a cowshed with calves, and not with monkeys. Does he not

know that he cannot have more than two thousand million supermen for the new supramental world, which, if it is to be conterminous with the Earth, can hold two billion supermen? What will become of the souls that are now seeking for rebirth? Will they be reborn in a superman family? Have they not the right thus to be reborn? Here is a coagulated clot of confusion. Aurobindo anticipates a bad end for the asram, for no sadhak by the power of *yoga* can become an incarnation and take his place, that is, his place as an incarnation of God.

XXXVI.

Q. **A**UROBINDO says, "The soul comes into birth for experience, for growth, for evolution till it can bring the Divine into matter. In another birth it will create for itself a different personality, different capacities, a different life and career. It develops a new character, a new personality, grows, develops, passes through all kinds of terrestrial experience". (Pp 87-88, **The Riddle**).

It is clear the soul cannot become superman until all kinds of terrestrial experience has been completed. Say about two thousand rebirths will be necessary for this purpose. Have his sadhaks completed their terrestrial

experience ? If not, why does he deceive them ? Why does he not send them back home to complete the necessary number of rebirths ?

Answer. And then ?

Q. When their terrestrial experience has been finished, say in a hundred or a hundred and fifty rebirths, they will come again to the asram.

Answer. But in the meanwhile Aurobindo will be dead and gone and none left to supermanize humanity or find unity for them.

Q. Aurobindo will bequeath his prophethood to some of his sadhaks. Is not prophethood real property ? There will be dozens of candidates, I suppose.

Answer. That is possible. But the new prophet will be as far below Aurobindo as Aurobindo is below God. And he will find the work too high for him. No body will go all the way from Bengal to have *darsan* of him. There will be nobody to reconquer the divine power of money for the benefit of God. The Asram itself will go out of repairs. Further, by that time the English language may be abolished from the curriculum of University studies. Is there anybody fit to translate "**The Riddle**" ?

Q. By the by, do not men visit Dakshineswar now to pay their reverence to the memory of Ramkrishna ?

Answer. Whether men go to Dakshineswar or not does not matter. But millions of men take part in anniversaries and centenaries celebrated all over the world to keep the memory of Ramkrishna alive.

Q. Does Ramkrishna attend any of them by virtue of rebirth?

Answer. I am not sure. But I know that Dr. Tagore will never attend any of his death anniversary meetings; he has solemnly declared in his "**Religion of Man**", "I do not know what happens after death". I am almost sure he will feel ashamed to attend them and more ashamed to speak at them, and still more ashamed to preside over them.

As to Ramkrishna, my opinion derived from the account of rebirth given by Aurobindo himself, is that his soul had very little terrestrial experience so far, and that therefore he is bound to be reborn, specially as he had an undivine end at death. Whether he has been already reborn is not yet certain. He will probably require "a long rest in the psychic world" (p 36 **Lights on Yoga**) as his disciples worried him too much and made his soul sick. He will require prolonged nursing in the psychic world. (p36, **Lights on Yoga**).

XXXVII.

Q. **D**OES the *yoga* of the *Saktimarga* permit any of the sadhaks to insure his life? If so, can a sadhak insure it for his own benefit at the next rebirth?

Answer. None of his sadhaks appears to have asked Aurobindo this important question, for I find no mention of it either in **'The Riddle'** or in **'Lights'**. But I know many of them have insured their lives.

Q. Are 'Life Insurance' and 'self-surrender' compatible with each other ?

Answer. They seem to be violently in collision with each other, unless the supramentalization-asram is specifically entered as the beneficiary of the Life Insurance policy. When man is supramentalized, two institutions will die a natural death, viz., Pension and Life Insurance.

Q. But the Asram may close down before the policy becomes ripe. What then ?

Answer. The policy-holder will either cease to pay the premium as soon as the asram is closed or change the name of the beneficiary.

Q. Does self-surrender mean surrender to the asram or to God ?

Answer. The question does not arise for those who believe Aurobindo to be an incarnation of God ; and as matters stand at present no person should be allowed to be a sadhak unless he executes an agreement to believe and regard Aurobindo to be an incarnation or at least a medium selected by the Divine for the diffusion of supramental light of the unmanifested type.

Q. Should not Aurobindo drastically revise **"The Teaching and the Asram"** before the next edition is issued ?

Answer. Certainly he should, unless the divine necessity of pretension stands in his way. Supramentalization presupposes pretension. The art of pretension is inherent in the soul of man. It exists in the psychic seed, the spiritual spark, and has existed there from the moment of its issue.

XXXVIII.

Q. **C**AN a sadhak marry ?

Answer. He can marry, if his object is to have pleasurable electric sensation (p76, **Yogic Sadhan**). He should not marry if his aim is to reproduce the species, for by reproducing the species he only hampers the work of supramentalization and prolongs it. The supramentalization of humanity cannot come to an end if reproduction goes on as an unceasing stream, and therefore the ideal of the unity of humanity can not be achieved. Besides, no man can ensure that the soul that will be reborn through him is qualified to be supramentalized. To reproduce bad souls with incomplete or bad experiences is positively to increase evil. Such souls when reborn, contaminate the neighbourhood like "liberated souls which extend their consciousness horizontally and reproduce similar souls as animals reproduce similar animals". Bad souls make the atmosphere stenchy in the same way as

liberated souls make it fragrant. Seeing that bad souls form the vast majority of the souls seeking for rebirth, it is best to remain aloof from reproduction.

Q. How to prevent reproduction ?

Answer. I have already told you that Science has invented good apparatus for birth-control.

Q. What will become of the unredeemed souls that are seeking for rebirth and experience in fresh careers of life ?

Answer. Leave them to be disposed of by the Divine, the all-loving God.

Q. If God induced me to open the field of rebirth for some of them ?

Answer. Then you will be at liberty to reproduce them.

Q. Shall I wait for God to disclose His will to me ? Am I not to work in anticipation of Divine sanction ?

Answer. *Post facto* sanction has become a bad habit with God. Our duty is to try to relieve Him as far as practicable.

Q. If God does not sanction a rebirth, what happens ?

Answer. That is why still-birth is becoming so common, also infant mortality.

Q. Are you sure you are not combining the sublime and the ludicrous ?

Answer. You are badly misunderstanding me. Who can distinguish between the sublime and the ludicrous ? No devout soul can separate them. Ludicrousness is the creation of God. The One transforming himself into the Many is ludicrous as well as ridiculous. Creation itself is ludicrous. What can be more ludicrous than the perfect making himself imperfect, the Eternal making itself durational, the infinite reducing itself into the finite, the absolute changing itself into the conditioned, the formless appearing in forms, the spirit transforming itself into matter ? The descent of God at Pondicherry and the selection of medium made by Him for the diffusion of divinization and supramentalization of humanity, Aurobindo's flight to the Transcendental, his descent to the cosmic Godhead, his carrying the *Gandhamadan* of supermind, his filling the world with superminds like the cow filling the cow-house with calves,—are not these things ludicrous and ridiculous at the same time ? Sublimity and frivolity are distinct only for those who lack serenity. The entire *lila* is ludicrous, frivolous, vexatious, a perfect nuisance created by the puissance of a jovial, hilarious, inebriated Divinity. If you are afraid of ludicrousness, if you are disgusted by it, you had better give up the idea of final realization of human unity, of the supramentalization of man, consummation of personality, of the utility of Aurobindoism. The *lila* is a huge masquerade, and what can be more ludicrous

than that ? Religion and Metaphysics are ludicrous. Science is barbarous. The fine Arts are frivolous. Creativeness is meaningless. Self-realization, in politics as well as in Religion, is the cry of madness. Capitalism, Socialism, Feminism, equality, liberty and stupidity all belong to the same category. They are all ludicrous, ridiculous, frivolous, and their object is to throw the world into a quandary of chaos. "The world is passing through a crisis", says Radhakrishnan. It is irredeemably passing into chaos, because it is trying to distinguish between the sublime and the ludicrous. What can be more ludicrous than the League of Nations now fulminating against Italy after the failure of oil sanction ?

XXXIX.

Q. **I**S theft permitted by Aurobindoism ?

Answer. Aurobindoism does not judge activities in terms of the Penal Code or any other recognised code of morality. All activities must have for their aim the facilitation of divine work. Also every man must take the immediate responsibility for his activities. "He must work for the best according to his own lights in each case." If he is likely to be caught red-handed in the commission of theft and handed over to the police, his lights will, of course, forbid him. If he is not likely to be so caught he may consider the situation in all its details. But one

thing he must always bear in mind that he can steal only cash money. Aurobindo has nothing to say regarding other kinds of wealth or property. 'Money and money alone legitimately belongs to God, and it is the right thing, the very supramental way of life, to conquer it from the asuras and usurpers who keep it for their own use and not for the use of the Divine.' The underlying principle is that the thief must promise to himself that he will spend the money on divine work and on divine work alone. This condition is prohibitive for most men. If a man cannot satisfy his own wants, what is the good of stealing a neighbour's money? Hence, there is so little theft in our society. But a sadhak being devoted to God's work need not be debarred from making the promise.

Q. What's God's work?

Answer. At present God's sole work is supramentalization, and to facilitate supramentalization theft is in a manner permissible, provided the person robbed is not himself engaged in helping the work of supramentalization, for that would be robbing Peter to pay Paul.

XLI.

Q. **W**HAT is Aurobindo's attitude towards social life?

Answer. Aurobindo wants all young men to be sadhaks of the *Saktimarga*. Half of them should live

in the asram and the other half outside. The former should devote all their time and attention to *yoga* and the latter divide their daily life between *yoga* and work.

Q. What work ?

Answer. The work of reconquering the Divine power of money from the asuras and usurpers, and of sending it to the asram in order to keep the yogic sadhaks alive in a decent fashion.

Q. How can they reconquer money from the usurpers ?

Answer. They can do so by force or fraud, which can be purified by the firm resolution to pay all the booty for God's work. The very name of God has a sanctifying power. Christ was a wine bibber. That did not lower him an inch in the moral and spiritual scale. Krishna murdered more men than any human being, except perhaps Mahomet, who conquered the divine power, not merely of money, but of all kinds of wealth, land, muscles, numbers. He conquered kaffirs by millions. They and their descendants are the most faithful men in the spiritual world. Without war and exploitation there can be no diffusion of spirituality. The Swadeshi movement failed because the divine power of money and men was in the firm grip of the British asuras and usurpers. Aurobindo can never forget the frustration and the consequent sorrow. Indeed that supplied the higher urge towards the unity of humanity, and this unity

translated itself upon second thought into the supramentalization of humanity. He has been somewhat damped by M. N. Sircar, who thinks that humanity in its totality or wholeness can never be supramentalized, which means that it can never be united. However he is not the man to be deterred or disheartened by anybody's opinion. 'It may be impossible to supramentalize mankind with existing supermind, but it will be possible to supramentalize them with an unmanifested supermind. Hence, he has changed the substance of the light, which he wishes to bring down. If vaccination fails, it is in our power to resort to inoculation. If we cannot shoot down larks, we may bring down the heavens. If we cannot realize god-consciousness, we may make God realize human consciousness.

Q. Will it not be possible peacefully to convert the asuras and the usurpers and persuade them to send all their hoarded money to the asram ? This will involve neither force nor fraud.

Answer. It may not involve force, but fraud is indispensable. Most of the outside sadhaks have been won over by fraud, by sinful concealment, exaggeration and distortion of truth. Concealment and distortion of truth is no monopoly of God.

Q. That's a serious charge against Aurobindo and his recruiting agents.

Answer. Propaganda is impossible without deception and fraud. Men are converted to Aurobindoism not

by the study of his philosophy, but by the deception, conscious and unconscious, practised by his recruiting agents who represent the Master as an incarnation of God, as God Himself, who has personally descended in the centre at Pondicherry as *Yogeswara* and *Jugadiswara*, rolled up in one personality for an important intermediate salvation of mankind.

Q. What is that intermediate salvation ?

Answer. Self-supramentalization is not final self-realization, but only a means to that end. When humanity have been supramentalized, God will descend again to cosmicise them ; and when the world has been cosmicised "Sakti will withdraw it into Herself and withdraw Herself into the Transcendental Siva." When these unintelligible, but alluring words enter into the ear-cavity of the raw young man, who finds an overplus of evil in life, he is fascinated like the reptile by the music of the *Setar*. The promise of the *Tanpura* (complete harmony) makes him a captive. A garden *sirdar* never has more success than the average recruiter who comes from the paradise of Pondicherry. Pondicherry is not a mere tea-garden. It has higher blessings to offer.

Q. Is there any account of the money that annually comes to the asram ?

Answer. I am not an Auditor of accounts. But I can well imagine that an increasing lot of money is being annually wasted, the chief gainers being the Railway Companies.

Q. How do the recruiters persuade people ? Can you indicate their mode of doing things ?

Answer. Aurobindo is an incarnation, because he has never suffered from disease of any kind, ever since he came to Pondicherry, because he eats only nominal food and can dispense with that also. He can challenge the restraints of gravitation. He knows the secret of *Mahima*, *Anima* and *Laghima*. The commode in which he makes stool is always empty. The piss-pot is never soiled. His blessing can cure diseases. His sadhaks invariably prosper in life. The unemployed among them soon get good jobs. He is always engaged in meditation. He allows people to have *darsan* of him only three days in the year, and even if the Viceroy went to see him on a wrong day he would be refused admittance. Who but an incarnation could have refused to receive into his presence such a great man, (he too is an incarnation) as Sir R. N. Tagore, who wrote in large types, "Accept Rabindra's greetings, oh, Aurobindo !" The wandering sadhaks go about with these charming messages about Aurobindo and credulous young men are easily caught.

Dr. Ramchandra is one of the cleverest recruiters of the asram. He writes in "Advance" (7th- March last) :— "For the last quarter of a century Pondicherry has been cynosure of all Egos since the advent of the long-recognized (political agitator) ? Aurora-faced Man-God, Sri Aurobindo, the most glorious star on the spiritual firmament this world ever has been blessed with (Buddha, Krishna and Christ are all turning in their graves and getting

ashamed of themselves). Then Pondy was a sleepy old port and as its importance began to increase the fame of the Divine Incarnation also spread far and wide, and from various corners hied devout souls who had received an inward call to rally round his august person. Until now there is a holy community of 150 strong and gradually the circle is increasing as the great all-seeing one's searching inner gaze determined the end of a particular mundane career and whispers a voiceless chant within the ear of his or her heart, when lo ! all earthly shackles are thrown over board, all world ambitions rejected and one more soul thirsting for God-consciousness hies ardently to take refuge at his beloved feet ; and every year from all the quarters of the Peninsula thrice hie people of all denominations—doctors, lawyers, service and business men, financiers and millionaires, from the uneducated and ignorant to the artists, poets, professors, philosophers and all strata of society and intelligentsia of every caste, colour and creed". Financiers and millionaires require special emphases.

Life at the asram is described thus :— "The shadhaks all assemble every morning for psychic education with their various spontaneous and ennobling traits and natural gifts cultivated and given full encouragement and scope. Thus one sees the artists at their canvas and brush, musicians at their instruments, songsters at their chants and *bhajans*, poets at poems, writers at their articles, contributions, novels dramas or *yoga* literary efforts ; the lady shadhaks in addition, at all manner of embroidery, brocade, sewing, cooking, singing and learning languages".

"The cultivation of the fine arts are given full scope and all their necessary ingredients amply provided for".

This is a very fascinating description. But does it agree with the following peroration addressed by Aurobindo himself?— "What then shall be our ideal? Unity for the human race by an inner oneness and not only by an external association of interests; the resurgence of man out of the merely animal and economic life or the merely intellectual and aesthetic into the glories of the spiritual existence". (Pp67-68, **Ideal and Progress**).

Has Dr. Ramchandra carefully read this passage which constitutes the foundation stone of the whole philosophy of Aurobindo? Will it be wrong to say that Dr. Ramchandra is ignorant of Aurobindo's philosophy? Why does he appear as a propagandist to allure young men with a false show? He proceeds, "Sri Aurobindo's vision is vaster than those of the erstwhile Masters". "His aim is to perfect the mind, life and body of man and to create a superman out of him".

God bless Dr. Ramchandra's cleverness saturated with ignorance. Who ever thought that superman revels in a perfect mind? Does he not throw it away and substitute for it supermind, an altogether different kind of faculty from the mind, which enslaves us and keeps us bound to the Ego? Do not mind, life and body constitute the Ego, which has to be assassinated and not strengthened and perfected? (p 98, **Lights on Yoga**).

If the existing condition of the asram is so charming, its prospective fascinations defy the power of language to picture them. "Sri Aurobindo's *yoga* aims at the heroic process of first attaining the divine and rising to supra-consciousness and then bringing down in fulfilment of a preconceived scheme of things all the felicities of heaven, until the human as a whole is transformed, rejuvenated, rendered immortal in this life, in this body and in this world".

Who can resist the temptation of these undefined felicities to be enjoyed in this very life, with this body and in this world ? To be saved from the trouble of walking to the other world is no mean advantage.

Q. Would it not have been more economical for Aurobindo to build a motor-road connecting the two worlds ?

Answer. He must have calculated the cost of both the schemes. Aurobindo "is neither a fool nor a drunkard".

Briefly speaking, the above peroration means that Aurobindo will first attain divine (*Transcendental*) consciousness and then bring down all the felicities of heaven in the asram at Pondicherry where men and women will soon be transformed (*into the divine ?*), rejuvenated (by *heliotropism*) and rendered immortal. Everybody knows that immortality has no value without heavenly felicity. It is rather an encumbrance. The necessity of rejuvenation may not be obvious to the ordinary reader, unless he

remembers "the pleasurable sensation of electrical phenomenon", most enjoyable in youth, of which Aurobindo has made mention at page 76, **Yogic Sadhan**. The sadhaks are now enjoying the beauty of terrestrial art, but when heaven will be brought down they will enjoy "celestial art". Ram Chandra has not given an inventory of the felicities of heaven, and has given no description of "celestial art". But concealment of truth is more stimulative than disclosure. This is an art. Then follows :— "The splendid dawn of a new Epoch-making Era is happily envisaged in no distant harizon where a new sun of supra-consciousness will arise in all its splendour". When will the new era begin ? Will it begin with the next *Satya yuga* ? Will it begin before the death of Aurobindo and Dr. Ram Chandra ?

"

Dr. Ram Chandra proceeds :— "They (the sadhaks) could then act in the world as dynamos of divine electricity, sending thrilling and radiating through mankind so that wherever one of them stands hundreds around become full of his light and force, full of God and full of *Ananda*".

The entire scheme of Aurobindo is founded upon what is called heliotropism in medical science, so characteristic of man and flying moth. There are creatures also who love darkness and solitude but these are insignificant. I have said elsewhere that heliotropism in moderate strength is good for man but is dangerous in its exuberance. Western civilization is heliotropic, catastrophically so, and statesmen will know it now with another a greater

war, impending over the world. Heliotropism does not make us moral but dispenses with the problem of morality altogether. (Pp85-86, **The Riddle**). "The solution of moral problems can only come by pressing forward towards a greater light, a greater consciousness", which rises from auto-centricism, expands into patriotism first and then into humanism (or anthropocentricism), next into geocentricism, heliocentricism, culminating in Divinocentricism. "Ramkrishna was God-centric". Aurobindo is heliocentric.

Q. When one sadhak electrifies and enlightens one hundred men, will he not charge any remuneration ?

Answer. Electrification is divine work, and divine work presupposes the reconquest of money. The electrifying sadhak will not have to ask for remuneration, but those whom he will electrify will automatically, spontaneously throw at him all their money, and he will gather it up for subsequent operations.

Q. Now, the electrified man will receive the light with his body and life. How will he support them if he gives away all his money ?

Answer. You mean to ask what he will eat when he is hungry. To this the answer is, he will psychicize the body when he is hungry. He can physicise the soul afterwards when the hunger has been frustrated.

Q. Why should he physicise himself again ?

Answer. He will physicise himself to enjoy with greater zest the felicitations of heaven. That is the distinctive feature of Aurobindoism. In all other *Mata*-physics felicities are enjoyed in heaven without body and life. But in Aurobindoism "you enjoy them in this body, in this life and in this world." That is the greatest attraction of the new *yoga*.

Q. What is the necessity of propaganda work under these circumstances ?

Answer. The necessity of propaganda work will cease when the Sun of supramental light has been brought down. Till then it is absolutely necessary.

Q. Does not Aurobindo say, "all propaganda, religious, political or social, has to be eschewed by the inmates ?" (p6, **The Teaching and the Asram**).

Answer. The inmates of the asram are prohibited. But the wandering sadhaks are not restrained. They are fully at liberty to carry on propaganda. Indeed, their chief duty is to do so. Dr. Ramchandra is, I believe, a wandering sadhak and he is doing his duty with great zeal and energy. He will be one of the first to be electrified or enlightened when supramental light has been brought down.

Dr. Ramchandra has promised to give more information about the Teaching and the Asram if anybody wants it. But I think he has already given more than enough information for the credulous, and no further

information is likely to induce the sceptic. He had therefore better not worry about more information. But why is he carrying on this propaganda? Does he really think that the salvation of the world in general and of India in particular, is likely to be accelerated by the neo-tantric *yoga*? Dr. M. N. Sircar does not believe in "dynamic salvation, and is rather annoyed with Aurobindo on account of this small error. He wants a little of withdrawnness. He was annoyed by "**The Religion of Man**", because there was no mention of withdrawnness in it.

XLII.

Q. IT is said, "The asram is not a religious association". (p6, **The Teaching and the Asram**). What then is it?

Answer. It pretends to be a mere philosophic association.

Q. Why then do so many people so eagerly visit the asram?

Answer. What can Aurobindo do to prevent people from going to the asram. The utmost he can do is to shut himself up in his meditation room, and hung up a sign-board at the gate, "**No admittance**".

Q. Why does he not do that?

Answer. By declaring to the world that he will receive *darsan* from visitors only on three days of the year, he has in a manner raised the sign-board mentioned by you. People have been virtually told not to go to the asram, and men are so stupid that they will not take the hint. What can Aurobindo do ? Why do you blame him ?

Q. Why does he allow people to see him at all ? Why does he not tell people, "Here is no incarnation, no religion, nothing for fools and stupidly credulous people ?

Answer. If people believe him to be an incarnation, how can he interfere with their will-to-believe ? And why should he do so ? If people offer him homage, specially in the shape of money, which is a divine power, why should he refuse it ? He is not a fool like those who go to pay him homage.

Q. But his mission is to bring down very resplendent light from the Transcendental for the benefit of humanity. Are these visitors not human enough to deserve the little light required to prevent them from wasting their energy, time and money in going to Pondicherry for *darsan* or even *Diksa* ? Can he not give them that amount of light ?

Answer. I have told you and every philosopher has said, that humanity consists of fools for the most part with a sprinkling of wise men. Aurobindo is one of the latter.

Q. I believe you also claim to be one of them ?

Answer. Don't be impertinent. I have bestowed much knowledge upon you. Is impertinence the reward of it ?

Q. I thought you were incapable of taking offence. By the bye, 'Is Aurobindo incapable of taking offence ?'

Answer. I thought him once to be incapable of taking offence. But recent information shows that Gods and therefore his incarnations are full of emotions and passions, vengeance and malevolence. An incarnation is not an incarnation of the impersonal God, but of the personal aspect. In the personal aspect God has emotions, much stronger emotions than man possesses, and he is capable of effectively showing it ; for His power is very great.

Q. I shall finish by asking another question. It is said the asram is not a religious association.' Is it only a philosophical association ? But Aurobindo has affirmed Philosophy is the intellectual search for the fundamental truth of things, religion is the attempt to make the truth dynamic in the soul of man. They are essential to each other ; a religion that is not the expression of philosophic, truth degenerates into superstition and obscurantism, and a philosophy that does not dynamise itself with the religious spirit, is a barren light for it to get itself practised." (p67, **Ideal and Progress.**)

Now, are we to understand that Aurobindo's philosophy is not dynamized with the religious spirit? If it is dynamized with the religious spirit, why does **"The Teaching and the Asram"** deny it? If it is not dynamized with the religious spirit, will not Aurobindo's philosophy one day degenerate into a barren light?

Answer. Every sensible man knows that Aurobindo's philosophy has already 'degenerated into dull, dreary mythography, mysticism, superstition and obscurantism.' It is slowly gathering the strength of dogma in a favourable soil. The muddled nature of our young graduates and undergraduates of the present-day seeks for further muddling in Aurobindo's supramental philosophy, like the drinker who seeks for drunkenness. Already signs of fanaticism are slowly making appearance. The sadhaks are creating a new brotherhood among themselves, and one of them seldom contradicts another, specially when two of them come into contact with an outsider. This is supposed to be a good sign, a sign of truth, for one man's truth cannot contradict another man's. When three sadhaks agree all doubt is removed, and the point agreed upon becomes a dogma. A dogma thus enthroned can challenge the rest of the world. The sadhaks of Aurobindo are most of them fanatics. They do not listen to reason, because reason belongs to the mental zone, not to the overmental zone or supramental plane. They prefer secondhand overmental or supramental light to first-hand reason. They have been taught to drain away their reason in order to facilitate the free irrigation of their minds with

higher light. They excuse their master on this point as he has got a mind elastic enough for both reason and spiritual experience, for dirty water and clean water. It is a hot water and ice bag. Being an incarnation of God he is above the reach of censorship. His word is truth. His dynamism is Divine. A man that contradicts him is a rebel against the Holy spirit. Old rebels must be slaughtered. Vedantists and Buddhists have been hurled headlong into the abyss of rebirth and suffering, and most of them have been transformed into daityas and hostile beings whose vocation is to manifest their malevolence to the sadhaks of Pondicherry by misleading them in the jungle of the overmental zone. Christians and Mussalmans of past generations are all unredeemed. Entire mankind are unredeemed, because supramental light has not been brought down yet. All our forefathers are now seeking for rebirth. God has incarnated Himself in Aurobindo not only for the salvation of the present generation of mankind but of all souls, individualized gods that have ever descended from the solitary home of the Transcendental. The Earth will be supramentalized without being pulled up to the supramental plane. The new supramental plane will be lower in space but higher in light and dignity. Supermen will be superior to souls ; for they will have complete experience of earthly life, and no man can be a superman until he has it. All these constitute the dogma of Aurobindoism.

Q. I can well understand Aurobindo supramentalizing the present generation of mankind. How can he supramentalize men of the past generations ?

Answer. Many of the men of the past generations are living in the present generation. The rest will be brought upto rebirth by *yoga* within the life-time of Aurobindo, "on which all depends".

Q. Is the entire soul population that issued as sparks from the Divine substance known to Aurobindo? How many of them are now taking rest in the psychic world? How many are living in this generation? How many of them are fresh spirits that have not yet descended on Earth for experience? How many are struggling in the overmental zone to separate themselves from life and mind after their death, like the Vedantists and Buddhists? How many are in the occult plane? Aurobindo has a vast task before him. When does he expect to die? Death alone can save him from all the troubles in which he has entangled himself. Is he anticipating death to liberate himself from the worries of incarnated life?

Answer. From the statement that "all depends on the Teacher and ends with his life-time", it seems Aurobindo is not expected to have a long life. But the date of his death is uncertain. His troubles, specially those regarding the reconquest of the divine power of money, are thickening furiously fast.

Q. Why does he not find it out by *yoga* and divulge it?

Answer. Do you consider Aurobindo to be so stupid as to tell his *sadhaks* that he would die on a given

date ? Christ informed his Apostles only two or three days before his death that he was going to be crucified. He was the Son of God. Aurobindo is God Himself incarnated.

XLII.

Q. **W**HAT makes you think Aurobindo will not live long ? Can he die at all ?

Answer. What do you mean ? "Death is the destiny of man", says Spengler.

Q. But Aurobindo is not a man, at least not an ordinary man. Having attained *Kāyasuddhi* and *Kāya-siddhi* he is free from disease. Instead of decaying his face shows increasing brightness.

Answer. How do you know that ?

Q. I know it from the photographs on cloths of the Arvind Mills.

Answer. Do you think that Aurobindo, who never allows even the Viceroy or Dr. R. N. Tagore to see him except on three days in the year, sits for a photograph whenever the photographer of the Arvind Mills calls upon him to do so ?

Q. I do not think it impossible. Does not Aurobindo say that without work the mind goes out of balance? Surely, sitting for a photograph is a kind of work. It brings relief from the boredom of meditation and is good work in the sense that it enables him to "reconquer a portion of the divine power of money" from the industrial and commercial asuras of the Arvind Mills.

Answer. You mean to say that Aurobindo charges money for the sitting?

Q. It is not impossible. And what is the harm? To collect money for the "divine work" can not be sinful, any more than to collect money by dancing and singing for "good work", i. e. work done for the benefit of humanity in its wholeness. C. R. Das said nothing is mean that forwards "nationalist work." "The tree is known by the fruit thereof". "The end justifies the means". Aurobindo always "works for the best according to his lights" and improves the light to discover the best. What more can you expect from him?

At all events it is time to return from the digression. My point is that Aurobindo cannot die, for he is free from disease. Can you deny this medical certainty?

Answer. He can commit suicide in Samadhi—*nirvikalpa samadhi*.

Q. Will not his sadhaks pour pitchers of water on his head to keep him from dying? Ramkrishna was saved from death once in that way. (**The Modern Prophets of India** by Romain Rolland).

Answer. R. R. has not reproduced that story in his **"The Life of Ramkrishna"** which is a thoroughly revised edition of **"The Modern Prophets of India"**. It is probable the story was false, but it is more probable that R. R. has found in it something fundamentally damaging to Ramkrishna, "who is very near to his heart".

At all events Ramkrishna's disciples had need of him. They could not afford to lose him or lose the benefit of his interminable aphorisms, full of wit and interest, amusement and instruction.

On the other hand, Aurobindo's death has become interesting for the leading men among his disciples, for only one of them will inherit the splendid asram. There is no provision in his will for dividing the patrimony among them. Aurobindo by continually living indefinitely is keeping him out of the *guddee* and mastership and mohuntship. It is said, "all depends on the teacher and ends with his life-time, unless there is another teacher who can take his place" (p4, *The Teaching and the Asram*). It is probable that when Aurobindo will be engaged in his final *nirrikalpa* samadhi the leading disciples of the asram will be fighting among themselves to decide which of them should take his place.

Q. What makes you think so? Ramkrishna's disciples did not fight among themselves when he died. Did they?

Answer. No, they did not fight, because, there was nothing there to fight for. Ramkrishna possessed no asram, no private property except perhaps the rag which he wore and which was properly burnt with his body. He was living as a guest at Dakshineswar Kali Badi which was the private property of the Zemindars of Jaun Bazar. Ramkrishna hated woman and gold (*Kamini Kanchan*). He probably hated land also. He considered gold and mud to have equal value. He suffered excruciating pain when his body was touched by the smallest piece of gold even in samadhi. For him gold was made by the devil. It was outside God's creation. For Aurobindo on the other hand, money represents a fundamental aspect of divine power : and the reconquest of the power of the divine, which is now captive in the hands of usurpers and asuras, is one of the most essential purposes of Aurobindo's mission. He is profoundly convinced that without the power of money supramental light cannot be achieved. To make assurance doubly sure he has laid down the following truth, the finest element of spiritual experience : "To reconquer it (money) for the divine to whom it belongs, and use it divinely for the divine life is the supramental way for the sadhaks".

Q. But he says also, "while you are a sadhak of the *saktimarga*, be a sadhak only". How to reconcile the two statements ?

Answer. This last statement has been inadvertently taken from the old 'Tantras, perhaps. You must not forget also that spiritual experience is subject to change

under the law of Evolution. Spiritual experience 'that is' divine truth moves towards perfection with the evolution of consciousness. What is true for the intellect is false for the Overmental consciousness. What is true for the Overmental consciousness is false for the Supramental consciousness. What is true for the supramental consciousness is false for the Cosmic consciousness. What is true for the cosmic consciousness is false for the transcendental consciousness. Aurobindo has now become an incarnation of the transcendental consciousness. He probably wrote "**Yogic Sadhan**" when he had intellectual consciousness only or at best Overmental consciousness. "**Lights on Yoga**" gives the latest truth. "To keep up work helps to keep up the balance between the internal experience and the external development; otherwise, one-sidedness and want of measure and balance may develop".

No sadhak should lose his balance of mind. It is probable when the asram was in course of building there was plenty of money in Mother's chest. It was not suspected that the asram would grow so fast as to make that chest all but empty. It is probable also that the wandering sadhaks are not paying so lavishly now as they did before. Anyhow the reconquest of the divine power of money has become a necessity, a most pressing necessity. The asram cannot go on with a deficit budget for an indefinite length of time, and without the asram the supramental light is impossible, for God requires a centre to descend upon to spread that light. The deficit budget continued for years is bound to compel God to seek for a new centre. He has shifted the centre from Dakshineswar

to Pondicherry. It will be inhuman, unsadhak-like to compel him to shift the centre so soon. It is possible God may even think of shifting it to Europe or America, where money is counted by millions as units. Roumieu Rolland would gladly receive God at Paris, should He think of shifting the centre to that artistically built town.

Q. The digression is interesting though long. Now to return to the subject under discussion, you think Aurobindo is the very antithesis of Ramkrishna ?

Answer. To a certain extent he is. But the antithesis is not so real or profound as you suppose. Ramkrishna's power depended as much upon money as Aurobindo's. In the case of Ramkrishna the divine power of money did not wait for his disciples to be rescued from the asuras and usurpers. It existed in profusion in the iron chest of Jaunbazar, having been reconquered from the poor peasants of the estate. The Zemindar of Jaunbazar was undoubtedly an asura or usurper. But he knew the power of God and feared Him. A God-fearing man is a fine object for exploitation. Ramkrishna exploited him unconsciously. He did so on such a small scale that he had no chance of realising the truth ; though as a man of commonsense, he ought to have perceived that without the power of this money he could not have lived at Dakshineswar nor entertained the visitors. Some of these visitors became disciples and, if I am not mistaken, occasionally had their meals at the temple premises. However, the whole thing was a small affair. The Zemindar never felt the out-goings.

The case of the Yogasram at Pondicherry is quite different. There exists everything on a large scale. The number of permanently lodged sadhaks there is 150. More are coming in. The buildings are inadequate. Some of them are going out of repair. It requires an increasing power of money to keep the splendid structure in good repair. Aurobindo is not the man to acknowledge defeatism, or to think of performing *nirvikalpa* samadhi until the divine power of money gets completely desiccated, and the asram becomes physically uninhabitable, losing all its artistic beauty and ceasing to attract learned and ignorant visitors who crowd round all the year round, specially three times in the year.

Q Was Ramkrishna really such a fool as not to perceive that, but for the Jaunbazar chest, he could not live a day at Dakshineswar, could entertain no disciples, could not acquire the title of Paramahansa, could not compel admiration from the outside world ?

Answer. Everybody knows that he was an ignorant man, "a little village brahmin" and had no idea of the science of Economics. If he ever felt that he could not be a saint unless Mathur Babu helped him, he felt that the latter was appropriately making atonement for his exploitation of the cultivators by spending it on God's work. Here, there is a fair agreement between Ramkrishna and Aurobindo. Ramkrishna probably felt also that Mathur babu was helpless, for he was compelled by Sakti to feed him and his disciples. Mathur babu was certainly a God-fearing man. He knew that unless he helped God-loving

men, Kali would deprive him of all his estates and reduce him to poverty like the poor cultivators whom he exploited. She might even throw a thunder on his head.

In those days all men were worshippers of God. Ninety per cent worshipped Him out of fear and ten per cent worshipped Him out of love and the affairs of the world went on smoothly and peacefully. But Chaitanya, Ramkrishna, Aurobindo and a vast number of Swamis, Gurus, Sohams, Paramahansas have spread the God-loving trait in men so widely and extensively that the God-fearing men have, out of sheer despair, become most of them, indifferent, even disloyal to God. They are called atheists, agnostics, deists, naturalists, rationalists and sceptics, because divine exploitation has become intolerable. Spiritual civil war is the order of the day.

The reconquest of money has thus become a very difficult adventure. The more ignorant among Aurobindo's disciples have not yet been able to get rid of their God-fearing temperament. They send large subscriptions to Pondicherry to feed the resident sadhaks and to attract more visitors to the asram. Many of these visitors lavishly pay donation out of shame or fear of God. Some pay from nationalistic motive. They think that it would be a national disgrace if they failed to maintain such a splendid institution, a product of creative art where, as disclosed by Dr. K. Ramchandra, the visitors enjoy singing, dancing, instrumental music, painting, poetry, embroidery, fine cooking, sewing, weaving, every morning, in addition

to the pleasure of finding scores of young men and women engaged in meditation for the achievement of supramental light. Is not the asram a heavenly place ? Will it be too much to say with Fardouci : "*Agar behest zeminasth, haminasth, haminasth wa haminasth*"

What was Ramkrishna's place like at Dakshineswar, compared with this resplendent asram ? Two small rooms and a verandah were placed at his disposal, and as regards the food, I had personal experience of it with a single meal, for I stayed one night with Ramkrishna once in 1879 A. D. It consisted of dirty *luchis* cooked in rancid ghee, some sugar copiously mixed with dust and a small quantity of badly dressed vegetable curry. No wonder, Ramkrishna died of cancer. If I had stayed on for another meal I might have died of diarrhoea and that in no very long time. The place was swarming with microbes.

Q. Is that the reason why there was no fighting among the disciples of Ramkrishna after his death ?

Answer. Ramkrishna had already given the disciples to understand that Naren (afterwards Vivekananda) would be the leader of the mission. Indeed no other arrangement was possible. Naren was easily the best among his disciples, and he loved him above all the rest of them for good and sufficient spiritual reasons. In some respects he was superior to Ramkrishna himself. Ramkrishna was to all intents and purposes an illiterate man. His

worldly experience was extremely limited. He knew nothing of history and geography, biology and psychology, politics and economics. He could talk on religious subjects and talk very amusingly. But he was unable to address a large audience. Could he ever be expected to attend the Congress of religions at Chicago? No doubt he had knowledge of God in all three aspects, viz, Siva, Sakti and Atman. But he had very little knowledge of God the wicked, humanity in its wholeness, of the unity of the human race, of the ideal man, of the cosmic man, of the superman, of Evolution, of the power of yoga to accelerate it, of God the miserable and of God the poor, that is, of the world in its naked actuality. Ramkrishna had never tasted the bitterness of agnosticism or atheism. He was a natural child of God, the good and the loving. He had never had the boldness to declare that he would never consent to be saved until all the rest of humanity had found nirvana or final realisation, or to affirm that the object of his worship was God the wicked, that is, the Devil. It may be comparatively easy to serve God the poor, but to serve God the wicked required more courage than Ramkrishna ever possessed. These things were possible only for Narendra.

Q. Was Narendra such a prodigy? He was a lad or *lunda* of twenty. How did he acquire so much experience and knowledge—knowledge of man and God, of this world and the other, of the fall and redemption, of the creative arts and philosophy?

Answer. I am surprised to hear all this. You seem to have no knowledge of rebirth. You say Vivekananda

was a lad of twenty ! Strange ! He was not twenty years, but more than twenty centuries old. He was no other than the famous ancient sage Nara, whom Ramkrishna had accidentally "met in the realm of the Absolute", a region which is above the stellar world, beyond the frontiers of the world of Relativity. This excursion was of course made by Ramkrishna in the course of a *nirvikalpa* samadhi. Finding Nara deeply engaged in meditation he threw his arms, like a child, round the latter's neck and asked him to come down to the world of relativity for the redemption of humanity. Narendra (**Nara plus Indra**) was Nara magnified or divinized by his last rebirth. He had more spiritual experience than Ramkrishna. Ramkrishna was John the Baptist, Narendra was the Christ. • On the earth plane Ramkrishna was James, and Naren was John Mill. The Ramkrishna mission is really Vivekananda mission. But for the Christ, the Baptist would have been forgotten long ago. The Baptist mission is a misnomer. All christian missions belong to Christ.

Ramkrishna had no idea of the wholeness of humanity or of collective or corporate life of any kind. He was kind to those poor men with whom he came in contact. He came in contact with some sonthals in distress at Deoghar and some Bengali cultivators at Mokimpur, who found it difficult to pay their rent in full, He exploited the God-fearing Mathur Babu, and compelled him to give a day's meal to the sonthals and a year's remission of rent to the helpless cultivators. This means that he

prevented Mathur Babu from exploiting the latter just for a year. But in the world there live at least 1500 million souls, suffering like the sonthals and the cultivators of Mokimpur. Could he think of rescuing them from their distress? He might at best be called a humanitarian, for whom the less he came out of his meditation room the better. He came out only to make mischief.

As to Humanism he knew too little of the human species, and of geography and history to have any comprehensive idea. Suppose Ramkrishna had met at Deoghar not fifty but fifteen million sonthals, hungry and naked lying on the two sides of the road leading to the temple of Siva. I doubt if he could have the heart to request Mathur Babu to give them a day's feeding. He would more probably have detested Siva who looked on human distress at such close range with such inhuman callousness. Nara alone could worship God the wicked. Ramkrishna was too unpretentious for such lofty spirituality.

Ramkrishna would have found himself at sea if anybody spoke to him of the *Pithecanthropus* or the man of *Chapelle-aux-saints* on the one hand or of Galileo and Newton, of Shakespeare and Milton on the other. How could he form an idea of the redemption of humanity which was an unknown quantity for him? Even the learned Aurobindo seems to think that the world occupies just a little larger space and has a somewhat larger population than Bengal, which he once tried to redeem from foreign domination and suffering. Does he intend to

supramentalize the pygmies of Africa or the Maoris of Australia? How could the author of "**The Life of Ramkrishna**" have swallowed the idea that Ramkrishna brought down Narendra from the realm of the Absolute for the redemption of humanity? Romain Rolland says that there are thousands of intuitionists and mystics like him in Europe at present. Intuitionism and mysticism does not seem to be a tropical disease, or a monopoly of the East. Cholera, Dysentery and Tuberculosis are all caused by microbes. Microbes can multiply a millionfold in a minute. The microbes of mysticism, having ruined the East are now spreading over the West, if R. R. is to be believed. These microbes lived sporadic lives in the Middle Ages in Europe. They had nearly died out in the atmosphere of advancing science. They are showing signs of revival. The theory of the Subconscious, instead of killing them are encouraging them to spread. **The Life of Ramkrishna** by Romain Rolland is likely to spread the microbes in epidemic form in India. I think R. R. to be a greater enemy of humanity than Ramkrishna, Narendra or Aurobindo.

Q. Your arguments regarding Vivekananda's superiority are not convincing from the spiritual point of view.

Answer. They may not convince you, but I am almost sure that if Ramkrishna had lived a few years more he would have fallen at the feet of Vivekananda for

extuition to improve his own intuition. If Ramkrishna reached the realm of the Absolute to meet Nana, Vivekananda personally realized and identified himself with the latter. He not merely felt like the absolute but thought and spoke as if he were unmistakeably and irrevocably transformed into the Absolute, not the silent but the eloquent, not the formless but the beautifully formed, not the emotionless impersonal but the fearlessly proud personal, Absolute. He told the audience at Chicago that he had no fear because he was the Absolute God, and all his audience were absolute Gods, listening and criticizing one another as to the degree of this absoluteness, and their relative position in the spaceless world, and the Evolution of their consciousness in timeless Eternity. The absolute and the relative are of course interchangeable terms in Hindu philosophy.

Aurobindo is a mere fox in the presence of the lion, Vivekananda. He has never ventured to come out of the Pondicherry asram lest people gave him pain by irreverence. But Vivekananda travelled all over the civilized world leaving the most learned men among his audience mystified, spell-bound, dumbfounded though only for the moment by the stately periods of his perorations. Even William James, the renowned sceptic philosopher of the fag-end of the nineteenth century reverently made quotations from one of his speeches, though he did so for purposes of criticism, his will-to-believe being obstinately blind to the redemptive influence of the address. It is unfortunate that Vivekananda never came in contact with

James or he would surely have converted him from Pluralism to Monism, from Relativism to Absolutism, from Pragmatism to Divine Eternal truth.

There were god-fearing men, men who gave the benefit of doubt to God, men who wanted to live on the safe side, men who, if they erred, erred on the right side,—there were men enough of this commonplace temperament to help Vivekananda in his tour. He was the beloved of the Absolute God, and revered by universal humanity.

Unfortunately, the fearless absolute personality died comparatively young by reason of disease and impurity of body which are detestable to Aurobindo and the Mother *Kali*. But while Aurobindo is merely seeking for supramental light at the bottom of the supramental world, Vivekananda not merely realized the absolute, head and foot, but was absolutely transformed into the absolute without losing his body, life, mind and soul. Why does not Aurobindo make a tour round the world, like Vivekananda, and tell mankind that he has descended from transcendental consciousness to redeem them one and all with glimpses of yet unmanifested supramental light? He looks like a cave-dweller in the presence of Vivekananda who has seen with his own eyes all that is worth seeing in the world of suffering and falsehood and incomplete truth, and half-truth, and evil—no, in this world which is born in ananda, lives in ananda and wheels from ananda to ananda,

Q. You may be joking, but I really am unable to make out why Aurobindo does not make a tour round the world and address large audiences in Europe and America to supramentalize humanity with victorious rapidity.

Answer. Aurobindo will have to gather the experience of speech-making in another rebirth, and the sooner he dies the earlier he will be able to come back with completed experience to redeem mankind with supramental speeches and divine deliverances much superior to those of Vivekananda. In his last rebirth he completed the experience of writing, and neglected the experience of speech-making. He must complete that experience in his next rebirth, and the sooner it comes the better. In ancient India the sages learnt to write. But in modern age writing is inadequate for a prophet. Christ was an exception. He could address an audience of five thousand men and feed them to satiety. He could saturate their minds with truth and fill their stomachs with nourishment miraculously. Speech-making is a miraculous power. Vivekananda possessed it ; Aurobindo lacks it.

Q. With all your tirades and innuendoes Aurobindo's name will live long in human memory for the one truth which he has been the first man in the world to discover, and to deliver to mankind.

Answer. What is that priceless truth ?

Q. It is the truth that no human being has so far found salvation, redemption, final realization, nirvana or absorption in God, for want of supramental light which is absolutely necessary for achieving these objectives. The ancient rishis did not possess this light. Christ and Mahomet did not possess it. Even the Buddha the Enlightened, did not achieve this light.

Answer. That is a gloomy truth. Aurobindo should be cursed for discovering this truth, and not blessed or admired. It would have been better for us not to know that they were still continually suffering in a world of falsehood and evil. Aurobindo should be stoned or crucified for bringing this message of gloom from heaven.

Q. But before his death he will probably bring down the supramental light and save all the souls of our ancestors.

Answer. I have already told you that he will have to complete his experience of speech-making in his next rebirth. But what makes you think that all our ancestors are unsaved ?

Q. I say this on the authority of Ramkrishna also. If Nara the ancient sage was subject to rebirth until 1863 (the year in which Vivekananda was born), how could anybody venture to affirm that men inferior to Nara had found final realization ?

Answer. Are you such a fool as to believe that Narendra was Nara in his previous birth? Ramkrishna says he met Nara in the realm of the Absolute. He could not have met him there before 1864, for it was in that year that he learnt from Totapuri the *Yoga* of the Impersonal Absolute. In that year Naren was already born and one year in age. I wonder how Romain Rolland swallowed this nonsense, or Vireswarananda failed to notice it. The latter was probably intoxicated by the kindness and sympathy shewn by such a great man as R. R. in writing the life of an Indian, a member of an inferior race. The Swami must have forgotten that Ramkrishna was an incarnation of God. Caste prejudice is always strong. A higher caste man hesitates to bow before the image of God in the house of a lower caste man. Race-feeling is stronger than caste feeling. We ought to be grateful to R. R. for slackening his race-feeling a little. It is difficult to shake off the inferiority-complex. It is still more difficult to shake off the superiority-complex. Swami Vireswarananda was evidently suffering from the inferiority-complex when he read "**The Life of Ramkrishna**" with a view to publish it. He lost his critical power in the treacherous pit of national pride.

This is not the place to enter into an examination of R. R.'s attitude to Ramkrishna. But the book looks like a post mortem report with which we are familiar in the criminal courts. Ramkrishna was not an incarnation of God, but God was present in him. "I see God as completely in the least fragment as in the whole cosmos". He is not

clear whether he sees complete God or a fragment of Him in the least fragment. How much of God does he see in Ramkrishna? On the answer to that question depends the correct view of R. R.'s attitude to him. That attitude has been deliberately confused to suit the taste of the reader,—western, eastern and variously mixed taste. But I doubt if Swami Vireswarananda has any clear idea of his own taste. R. R. seems confused as to whether the people of India live in the 20th. century A. D or the 30th. century B. C. He thinks we are living in both. In either case India has reason to be proud. For each of the two centuries mentioned above is glorious in the history of humanity. R. R. is concerned for the "wise men" of the west who can live in one century only, and cannot live in all the centuries of history, and enjoy life more fully. Personal enjoyment is the objective aimed at by M. Rolland in writing **"The Life of Ramkrishna"**. He wants his European readers to prepare themselves for a fuller personal enjoyment by reading the book. He admires his Indian readers for the power of enjoying life as it exists today and as it existed 5000 years ago. He does not say whether we should learn to enjoy life as it existed in the interim, which covers four thousand and eight hundred years. Briefly speaking, R. R. has discovered that mystic life as well as scientific life is enjoyable. It is foolishness to limit one's enjoyment to scientific life only. But is it possible to ~~unite~~ ^{unite} the two kinds of life and enjoy both of them at the same time? Probably R. R. has united them—united reason with blind faith, supermind with human mind, intuition with intellect, direct vision with conceptual knowledge, complete truth with half-truth and utter

falsehood, ananda with suffering, bright light with twilight, cosmic consciousness with self-consciousness, the superman with the everyday man, the cosmic man with the ego-bound man, the ideal man with the ordinary man, the religious man with the agnostic, the monist with the dualist or pluralist, God with the devil, the absolutist with the pragmatist. It is possible to unite each pair superficially. And, indeed to tell the truth, no prophet of India, ancient or modern, has succeeded in uniting them at core. The enjoyment of life afforded by the unity of opposites is unreal, fictitious, a theatrical show. If this be true **The Life of Ramkrishna** by Romain Rolland is a mischievous book. It is a tempting book, and any person who wants to read it should recollect the prayer "Lead us not unto temptation". We have reason to beware of hostile brotherhood and rationalized faith and intuitivized understanding. In a profound sense "**The Life of Ramkrishna**" is a literary curiosity. It is neither philosophy nor history. Its aim is to promote the union of arbitrary will and unchangeable order. In short, it unconsciously aims at making the confused life of man more confounded.

Q. What is the crucial agreement between Ramkrishna and Aurobindo ?

Answer. The aim of each of them is to enjoy life in meditation and to pretend that he is living without exploiting people, and that his object is to redeem humanity by self-sacrifice, self-surrender, self-forgetfulness, secretly mixed with self-consciousness, self-consummation, self-adoration, introversion and unilateral intoxication.

Q. What is the quality that distinguishes Aurobindo from Vivekananda ?

Answer. Vivekananda was a great speaker, Aurobindo is a great writer.

Q. What distinguishes Aurobindo from Dr. Tagore ?

Answer. At present both are great beggars ; Tagore's method is clumsy and Aurobindo's is clever up to date. Both have failed to achieve their mission. The former is working for humanity to expel God out of man's universe, the latter is working for God to expel humanity out of the Earth. The first is unable to bear the blinding brightness of God, the second, to tolerate the stenchy smell of man. For the one, God has taken shelter beyond the frontiers of the universe ; for the other, God has descended upon the earth to make an effective conservancy arrangement by psychicising humanity, by ridding man of his excretive proclivity, falsely supposed to be an absolute necessity.

XLIII.

AUROBINDO has definitely shewn that all past philosophy is false, that therefore the world continues to be ignorant, stupid, suffering and helpless. You have added that Aurobindo's philosophy is also false

and not a single soul has hitherto been saved, ultimately saved so as to be beyond the reach of Evil. What then is the world to do ?

Answer. The best answer that suggests itself to me is that for two or three generations there should be made no attempt to find a new philosophy of life, and that the whole field of metaphysical speculation should be kept fallow, like the mind of the genius which is kept at rest for intuitional illumination. Does not Radhakrishnan say, "We must allow the intellect to lie fallow, let the object soak into the subsoil of our mental life and elicit its reaction to it" ? This is an excellent advice, and I request all prophetic-minded people to keep their intellect, particularly their imagination, fallow for half a century. Then the illumination is bound to come with higher resplendence.

Q. Are you in earnest ?

Answer. If I have ever been earnest in anything, I am earnest on the present problem. The prophets that have so far brought messages from the other world have badly muddled that world, and we do not know what it is like, to say nothing of what it ought to be. Aurobindo has muddled it most, and men should particularly beware of his metaphysical speculations, which have now degenerated into mythological impertinences. What is still called Aurobindo's philosophy is sheer effrontery, ambition, megalomania, self-divinization.

India has definitely lost this world. We falsely console ourselves with the idea that we have gained the other

world. Aurobindo has shewn that we have lost the other world more profoundly than we have lost this. He suggests that our endeavour should be to bring down the other world on this, and thereby destroy the latter, which has become stenchy, bitter, repulsive to eye and ear, taste and touch, pretending to enhance its value ; as a matter of fact, he wants to give it a higher value than the other world.

Q. I understand what you mean. But what about the existing speculations ? How can we stop the hindu-mahomedan speculations. The hindu requires music to please his gods ; Allah is dead against it. We must either compel Sakti to give up music or compel Allah to like it.

Answer. I am fully aware of the difficulties of the situation. Not only common-place hindus but such great men as Dr. Tagore and Dr. Ramchandra will be extremely angry if music is abolished. Music and harmony is their ideal. Will they give up their idealism to propitiate the mussalman, who hates music ?

Q. How to bring about a compromise between Sakti and Allah ?

Answer. Starve both of them out. Give them neither puja not prayer.

Q. What about the Christian God ?

Answer. Let the compromise be trilateral.

Q. Ramkrishna said, "Sakti, Allah and God are one".

Answer. Did he prove it? Muddle-headedness reached its acme in Ramkrishna. Aurobindo knows that Allah and God are both unsupramental. They are ethnocentric spirits, who descend not from above but ascend from below for the disruption of human unity. The best thing is to ignore them. Neither of them possesses cosmic light, not even supramental light. Aurobindo must supramentalize Allah and God before he begins to supramentalize humanity in their wholeness.

Q. In one respect Allah and Aurobindo are in agreement. They are both fond of pleasurable electric sensation (**P76, Yogic Sadhan**). Are they not ?

Answer. Yes, you are right. But Aurobindo enjoys the sensation out of the antagonism of heat and cold. Allah permits his devotees to enjoy it by the antagonism of sexual difference, when they go to heaven.

Q. Is union between heat and cold similar to the union between man and woman ?

A. That is a question of temperament.

Q. If unity of humanity is injurious and impossible, is it not better to cultivate disunity and disruption ?

Answer. The Gods are not waiting for your co-operation. Disruption is more than half-complete, thanks to the efforts of the League of Nations.

XLIV.

Q **Y**OUR declamations against Aurobindo's metaphysical speculations, though they seem to be sound, find no support from Dr. Radhakrishnan's considered opinion expressed in the foreward to Dr. A. C. Das's commentary on the same. He says, "Among the present-day Indian thinkers Sri Aurobindo is perhaps the most accomplished. His firm grasp of the fundamentals of true philosophy and his abundant love for humanity give to his writings a comprehensiveness rarely to be met with".

Answer You have completely misappreciated all that I have been telling you so long. Who ever denied that Aurobindo is a great thinker, that is, a great philosopher ; for philosophy is one of the products of thinking. Philosophy is after all an intellectual art, and the human intellect is the source and seat of untruth, half-truth and incomplete truth. With Divine discontent with this trait of philosophy Aurobindo has flung away or is about to fling away this pernicious faculty of thinking. Thinking is a bad habit that still persists in man. Dr. Radhakrishnan has got this habit par excellence. He is an ideal thinker, though he is convinced that "thought is useful but not true, but intuition is true though not useful. Intellectual consciousness is practical". (p 144, **An Idealist View of Life**). Regarding the value of intuition he says, "We must respect our dignity as rational beings and thus diminish the power of fraud" by which intuitionists deceive ordinary men. Thus intuition comes out second best. Aurobindo regards intuition as the discoverer of

half-lights and half-truth. Radhakrishnan sticks to thought, intellectualism, though he knows it to be false, and makes it the judge of intuition. Aurobindo is more consistent. He throws both intellect and intuition into the dust-bin, as not only worthless but ultimately injurious. He seeks for supermind. Whether his search has been, or is likely to be, successful is a different question

The ultimate purpose and the intermediate ideal of his dynamism is to transform man into superman. The transformation, he says, is deeper and more significant than the transformation of the monkey into man. Yes, his love for humanity is equivalent to our love for the monkey or the dog. He loves man not for what he is, but for what he is capable of becoming by evolution. His love for humanity may be compared to our love for the pariah, the most wretched dog, who carries within him the potentiality of Godhead. The human race must be replaced by the superman race, for it is so vile. He has undoubtedly great pity for it, but no man who has any respect for his own dignity as a rational being can mistake pity for love.

It may be argued that Aurobindo himself is a man, a pariah, a member of the human species of dog. His pity for humanity must therefore be equivalent to love. It might have been so in the past. But at the present day he is an incarnation of God. His sadhaks believe him to be one. Dr. K. Ramchandra is neither a fool nor a drunkard. He is broadcasting the opinion, prevalent among the sadhaks, that Aurobindo is a god-man, an

incarnation of God. Aurobindo has come to believe it as a fact known by spiritual experience. The habit of speaking with the dignity of an incarnation is steadily and swiftly developing within him. He does not speak to any man who does not regard him as an incarnation.

To call such a personality a first-rate philosopher or thinker is to desecrate him, to do violence to his sanctity and purity and transcendental dignity. It is probably true he has not descended with the majesty of an incarnation, he has not been born with the immaculateness of one, but he has acquired both, by his own articulate dynamism at pondicherry asram.

To conclude this unpleasant topic, I shall only point out that Radhakrishnan has yet to prove the sincerity of his heart as he has already proved the comprehensive sharpness of his intellect. One has to be careful in gathering Radhakrishnan's opinions which are ingeniously mixed up with the opinions of the greatest philosophers of the world, of the present-day as well as of the past ages. The truth is Aurobindo now loathes intellectual thinking and he loathes humanity. His mission is to transform both, the first into supramental experience, and the second into a race of superman.

XLV.

Q. IS there nothing in this world which you regard as good? In criticizing Aurobindo's metaphysical speculations you have inhumanly dissected Ramkrishna;

Dr. Tagore has not escaped unscathed, and now you have brought a serious charge against Dr. Radhakrishnan's sincerity of heart. These men constitute the glory of India. We are respected abroad because we have these great men born and living among us, and we call them our own with pride. Who will read your book when he comes to know that you are a professional critic? You have not even spared Gandhi. Apart from other considerations, is it good policy to adversely criticize great men to whom India is bound to be grateful?

Answer. Truth and policy are two distinct things. They are often antithetical. Most men have more regard for policy than for truth. Cantankerous regard for policy has brought humanity to the verge of ruin. Look at the statesmen of the world. Have they any regard for truth? Even philosophers are ceasing to have regard for truth and singlemindedness. Dr. Radhakrishnan possesses a multiple mind. As a speaker he can carry an English audience in England, and in India he can charm an Indian audience. He has got the double consciousness of Englishmen and Indians. He himself regrets that he has got a disintegrated mind. He himself regrets that he is not a whole man, a real individual, a sea-worthy personality. His responses are formal and his actions imitative. He knows that all men are like him, and the only difference between him and them is that he knows what he is, while it is the privilege of other men to be ignorant. He insists on the absolute necessity of self-integration. You want me to regard him as a fully integrated man: Professor Joad regarded him as an integrated personality

at a dinner party at H. G. Wells' Flat. But that was only a momentary regard, and it was gained at the expense of articulateness, that is, by owlsh silence, deliberately adopted, as a matter of policy.

Dr. Radhakrishnan is undoubtedly a great philosopher, for he is unceasingly engaged in the search after truth in the same way as Bernard Shaw's Black Girl was engaged in the search of God. She found her God in an Irishman who spoke bad English and had the bad habit of covering his body with cotton fabrics. This last habit is common to all Gods. Every one of them has the habit of concealing himself, and wherever he appears he does so in disguise. The object of the spiritual philosopher is to drag him out of his concealment and to persuade him to throw away the mask, and disclose his real nature.

After exhausting his search of God Dr. Radhakrishnan came to the conclusion that "Religion is the perception of (*unknowable, indefinable*) Eternal in the finite", (**P 12, Idealist View of Life**). He has laid emphasis on the undetainableness of God in his recent presidential address at the Ramkrishna centenary meeting held in Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Hall at Bombay. This of course is not an ultimate truth, but brutally pure agnosticism. Professor Joad regards him as an agnostic. Dr. Radhakrishnan confirms him by making the serious affirmation that "The world would be a much more religious place if all the religions were removed from it". (**P 45, I. V. L**). This does not except Ramkrishnaism. As a matter of policy he told the audience at Bombay that "God had not given the monopoly of truth to any particular religion". What did the

audience understand him to say ? Did they understand that truth belonged to every religion or that it ' belonged to none ? Not even to Ramkrishnaism ? Those who had read the "Idealist View of Life" went away with the second idea and the rest with the first. It is unintelligible how an agnostic came to be selected as President of a religious meeting. Ramkrishna believed that Islam, Christianity and Hinduism were all one and the same at heart, though he had a special predilection for Saktaism. His followers, as a matter of course, believe the same. Their consciousness has now been enlarged. Radhakrishnan has added agnosticism for their benefit. As a matter of fact, most of the followers of Ramkrishna are already agnostics, for Vedantism is agnosticism according to Aurobindo, and they are primarily followers of Vedantism. Why don't the followers of Ramkrishna hang up a portrait of Huxley, the originator of agnosticism in the modern sense, at Belurmath and offer homage to it ?

Q. What is the meaning of "the perception of the Eternal in the finite" which Dr. Radhakrishnan considers to be the true definition of religion ?

Answer. It means that there exists "a supreme, inscrutable power behind the universe" who rules or misrules it under certain fairly comprehensive laws. Radhakrishnan's definition of God agrees with that of Herbert Spencer, the chief expounder of agnosticism. Mathew Arnold goes a step beyond it when he defines God as "the Eternal that makes for righteousness". Does not God also make for unrighteousness ? Aurobindo says that it is the apparent unrighteousness of God that

furnishes the urge to spiritual life. His exact words are "Indeed this perception (of inadequacy suffering, evil) is in a way the starting point of the spiritual urge". (p 92, *Riddle*). We are all pragmatists, and pragmatism discards the Absolute. Aurobindo calls the above perception "The Riddle of this World"; and he has undeniably failed to solve it with the existing cognitive faculties in the possession of man. He, therefore, tries to escape from agnosticism by pretending that we may, by *yoga*, acquire by means of what may be called supramental or suprainTELlectual light which will enable us to know or see God in His true light. He thinks God makes for righteousness only and assumes that God is righteous, though in His manifestations He pretends to be unrighteous at times. The duty of man is to expose this pretension. This pretension is manifested in the Lila, which is "the very soul of reality", according to Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar's interpretation of Aurobindo's philosophy. Ramkrishna thought that it was futile to try to know what God was like; the best thing that man can do is to ask God to give us ananda or supreme delight. Religion is thus identifiable with absence of religion, and the fuss that the world makes of it is the result either of insanity or of the natural tendency towards self-deception leading to the deception of neighbours. "We are mad ourselves", say the prophets, "it is our duty to make others mad". Madness is the ultimate truth of religion. Ananda is another name for it.

Q. You have said that truth and policy are two distinct things, often antithetical to each other. Will you kindly give me a full explanation of the distinction?

Answer. Policy belongs to a wider consciousness than truth. Truth is a form of policy. This is clearly indicated by the aphorism, "Honesty is the best policy". Aurobindo has shewn that we are badly in need of enlarging our consciousness. He evidently means that without such enlargement we can not grasp all the forms of policy. It enables us to have diplomatic relations with God, and to co-operate with Him advantageously. Policy aims at benefit. The individual, the community, the nation and humanity have each a policy of its own. Truth tries to place a heavy limitation upon policy. It means a diminution of consciousness, an undesirable degree of narrow-mindedness. It tries to lead us to the one instead of expanding our consciousness into the manifold. Policy is pragmatic, utilitarian, expedient with a wide range of perspective. Truth has no respect for consequence. The ancient Rishis of India, in their search of and devotion to truth, came to the conclusion that God by creating the world diminished Himself drastically from infinity to finitude, from the formless impersonal to the formed personal. In short, God transformed Himself into a magnified man, an ideal man. This shows the fearlessness of truth. Truth is bold and brave, policy is cowardly. Truth is immutable, policy is changeful. We have respect for truth, but we have a higher respect for policy. Hence, we have corrupted truth by creating what is called pragmatic truth, a cross between genuine, naked truth and well-dressed policy. Pretension belongs to policy. It is supported by pragmatic truth. When Aurobindo says, "I pretend to be ignorant", "I pretend to be suffering", or when Christ said "Father, hast Thou forsaken me", they uttered pragmatic truths, controlled by policy.

Philosophers, who strictly follow truth and have no policy to guide them, do not receive much honour. A prophet fixes upon an ideal as a matter of policy and tries to support it by pragmatic truth. The ideal of "the unity of humanity" was formed by Aurobindo in this way. The underlying idea is charming. Respect for truth led him to discover that the ideal could not be accomplished without annihilating the human race, and replacing it by a superman race—a race as far, at least, above the human race as the latter is above the arboreal race. A superman can fly in the air by his own intrinsic power. He requires no Aeroplane. His body is fragrant with spirituality and, when he stands in the midst of a crowd, the whole assemblage is impregnated with fragrance, for his soul is liberated. Liberation means freedom from bad smell, ugliness, noise, bitterness of taste, that is, from painful and repugnant sensations of all kinds. One liberated soul liberates a thousand suffering souls by "his horizontal perception of unity". It ascends to the Transcendental by its vertical perception of unity.

These are pragmatic truths hatched by the men of policy. Truth is not an end. It is subservient to policy at times. But policy expects better service from truth. Policy also is a means to an end. The real end of all our dynamism is ananda, the loftiest and noblest kind of pleasure. It is the objective, particularly of our religious dynamism. Other kinds of dynamism aim at happiness, which is a much lower form of ananda.

Q. Is Dr. Radhakrishnan guided by truth or policy?

Answer. Having one of the broadest minds of the world, Radhakrishnan could never bear the limitations imposed by truth. In his *Hibbert Lectures* of 1929 he did not pretend to deliver any truth to the audience. He gave them opinions and statements made by all manner of philosophers, ancient and modern, and left them either to choose among them or reject all of them. He has no faith in truth ; for truth, in his opinion, is useless, particularly intuitive truth. (page 145, I. V. L.). His object was to lay before the audience a panoramic view of philosophic efforts made by men from primitive times down to the present day.

Q. Did he not lay emphasis on any particular opinion ?

Answer. He often made a show of emphasis here and there. But his emphasis is treacherous, squint-eyed, dangerous to depend upon. His philosophic perfidy is well-sustained, though not to the end, and that is a dangerous trait.

Q. Was he then guided by policy in accepting the charge at Manchester Hall ?

Answer. I believe you have enough intelligence to answer that question yourself.

Q. What was his policy in accepting the Presidentship at the Ramkrishna centenary meeting at Cowasjee Jehangir Hall ?

When ..

Answer. I refuse to answer that question also. I can say that, if he had any respect for truth or for the good of our youngmen, he would have refused to accept

the invitation of clearly muddle-headed men, who did not care to inquire whether the President had made any pronouncement as to the qualities of the teachings of Ramkrishna. A man who says that religion is merely "a perception of the existence of the infinite in the finite," that is, of the unknown and unknowable infinite in the knowable finite is hardly expected to believe that Ramkrishna was a Paramahansa, an embodiment of the infinite spirit. All that he knows about God is that He is infinite and that He resides in the finite as well as outside it, for the infinite limited to the finite is nonsense. Beyond this every statement made is *aber glaupe*, extra-belief. When, as President, he said God has not given a monopoly of truth to any particular prophet, he disclosed a stupendous, bewildering, astounding extra-belief. In short, he transcended the limits of truth as laid down by himself for himself. As President he was bound to say something in praise of Ramkrishna's teachings, which he believed to be false, catastrophically false, in its wholeness.

The only occasion on which he disclosed his mind was when he explained the philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, with whom he was in complete agreement as to the untruth of all that is uttered about God beyond the fact that He exists, concealed in the finite, at best, vaguely apprehended by it. He showed great boldness and respect for truth when he affirmed that what is known as the philosophy of Rabindranath was no philosophy at all, but an atmosphere. What kind of atmosphere? A philosophic atmosphere or a poetic one? In any case, Radhakrishna never discloses more than

half his mind. He retains the other half for future use.

Q. Do you find any agreement in the views of Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan and R. N. Tagore ?

Answer. Agreement on any particular point is meaningless, when their world-views in their wholeness are different. Besides, being all of them staunch evolutionists these great men—a great man is one whose consciousness evolves quickly—are bound to hold different views at different times. To take a superficial view, the only point on which they agree is that the world is not what they wish it to be, that the world is in need of reform, to be undertaken either by God, or by man and God collaboratively combined.

Q. What I want to know is whether they agree as to what the world should be for the next century or so. I know the world cannot be the same thing eternally, for evolution would not permit it. I know they can have no final realization ; I want to know their immediate ideal and how they intend to accomplish it and how long they are likely to be contented with it, when achieved.

Answer. I have told you several times that idealism and evolutionism are mutually antagonistic. These great men are evolutionists and idealists at the same time. There is some screw loose somewhere in their complex personality. They suffer from two distinct urges, the idealistic and the evolutionistic urge. They think both the urges will take rest, when man becomes superman or ideal man or self-integrated man. I need hardly say that Aurobindo wants to be a superman ;

Rabindranath, an ideal man ; and Radhakrishnan, a completely self-integrated man. When they have reached these levels, they will take up humanity as their field of work, and remain engaged in it till all men are transformed into supermen, ideal men and self-integrated men. They all agree that the spiritual entity in man is weltering in disorder. The owner of the house is a weak-minded soul, incapable of evolving order out of this chaos. Aurobindo prescribes *yoga* , Rabindranath prescribes curbing and stressing of the faculties and Radhakrishnan wants to complete the personality by adding the environment or not-self to the self.

Q. Did one monkey transform itself into a man and then humanise the rest of the monkey race ? How then does the monkey race still continue to live ?

Answer. I understand what you are driving at. All the three great men are somewhat vague and uncertain on this point. They make a difference between biological evolution and spiritual evolution. Aurobindo is somewhat confused on this point. He says, "The superman reproduces himself in superman, surrounded by monkeys . Apart from the question of gamogenesis, it seems to Dr. M. N. Sircar impossible for one superman to supermanize the whole human race. So he thought that the human race will continue to live and that the human species would be divided into two races, the superman and the human race. He thus dealt a heavy blow on the head of the unity of the human race. Dr. Radhakrishnan says with Aurobindo, "The individual who achieves unity or self-integration within himself sets

other men forward in desiring the same goal." This, of course, is too vague to convey any practical meaning. Indeed, Radhakrishnan knows how to make indefinite ideas appear as definite. He is a true artist in philosophic literature.

XLVI.

Q. **D**O you really think Dr. Radhakrishnan did violence to truth in presiding over the Cowasjee Hall meeting ?

Answer. Certainly, he did do violence to truth when he said, "there were people who told them that the world would be a much better place to live in, if there were no religion. That was an impossible idea". Compare this with what he said at page 45, **Idealist View of life**, namely, "the world would be a much more religious place if all the religions were removed from it". Radhakrishnan may, no doubt, explain that he spoke impersonally at Manchester Hall and has spoken personally at Cowasjee Hall. This is his way of speaking things. He never reveals himself definitely, but rather tries to conceal himself in a cloud of words and ideas. Joad says :— "It is indeed a defect of his method, which Sir Herbert Samuel and others have pointed out that the reader (Radhakrishnan's reader or audience) is sometimes not as clear as he would like to be whether Radhakrishnan is speaking his own mind or revealing the minds of others, or whether, when he is quite palpably doing the

latter, his tacit agreement with what he is telling us is to be assumed". (p 161, **Counter Attack from the East.**) What Sir Herbert Samuel considers to be defect is not a defect at all, but a symbol of cleverness amounting to literary jugglery and swindling. He cheated the English audience at Manchester Hall, and he has cheated the Indian audience at Cowasjee Hall. Literary jugglery is his profession. He has no regard for plain truth. It is not God alone that has the merit of "concealing and disguising Himself", as Aurobindo is proud to affirm ; but there are chosen men who are trying to conceal and disguise themselves. If the imitation of the Divine is a good thing, Radhakrishnan may claim to stand high in the order of merit. His Convocation lectures furnish wonderful illustrations of his devotion to God in respect of concealment and disguise. Of course, **The Idealist View of Life** is incomparable in this respect. It can challenge all manner of criticism, though it never tries to convince anybody. His philosophy is a confused atmosphere, fragrant to immediate perception, but injurious in the long run. He gives us light, but no truth. The light is green, yellow, red, blue, indigo, violet and orange coloured. They are confused. If Radhakrishnan were a railway station-master, accidents might happen everyday, without himself being prosecuted for holding up false signals.

Radhakrishnan has no respect for intuition, understood as a transfirmamental message or a subliminal intimation or perception, which is comparable to subcutaneous exhalation or perspiration caused by that peculiar kind of *yoga*, popularly known as *Jala-yoga*.

But Ramkrishna has no value, if intuition in the first sense is eliminated from him. The address at Cowasjee Hall has not been published in full. I think Radhakrishnan kept the audience under a spell by beautiful, fascinating irrelevancies of which he has an inexhaustible store always at hand. Relevancy would have led him either into fine, false flattery or coarse vituperation, that is, either to attractive untruth or repulsive truth.

"An Idealist View of Life," the title of the volume which gives the *Hibbert Lectures* is a misnomer. It is misleading. The appropriate name would be *"Varieties of Idealist View of Life"*. It is not Radhakrishnan's view, nor any other particular philosopher's view, but a confused collation of views,—a veritable ferry-boat! Self-concealment is artistically and silently accomplished.

There are, however, a few passages in the great book which give more or less certain glimpses of Radhakrishnan's personal attitude towards religion and faith;—

- (1) "Our concern is with those who find themselves, while willing, incapable of belief. Their doubt is an expression of piety, their protest a kind of loyalty". (p 50).
- (2) "We want religion as an uplifting power and not as a confession of belief" (p 212).
- (3) "We become more religious in proportion to our readiness to doubt and not to our willingness to believe". (p 219).
- (4) "It is too difficult for us to know what is happening behind the screen. It is Maya or a mystery which we have to accept with reverence". (p 344). He means recalcitrant reverence.

Are these views such as would justify him to accept the Presidential seat at a Ramkrishna centenary meeting? What did the inviters expect him to say? Did he fulfil their expectations? Fortunately, the followers of Ramkrishna are losing courage of their conviction by the general apathy of the world. They did not expect Radhakrishnan to say that Ramkrishna was a paramahansa, after the severe shock which Dr. Tagore gave them in his *Kamalu Lectures*.

Did Dr. Radhakrishnan preach the beauty, utility, validity and necessity of individual salvation at Cowasjee Hall? Did he tell them that simultaneous or collective salvation of humanity was a chimera, hatched in learned hearts troubled by the warring, murdering, exploiting propensity of human nature? Did he expose the kind of good, but economically erroneous, work done by the Vivekananda Mission, incorrectly but popularly known as the Ramkrishna Mission? Did he tell the audience that all god-loving men had the right to live on the charity of God-fearing men and women like the Zemindars of Jaun Bazar? Did he tell them that Keshav was a fool to say that he would like to be plunged day and night in the meditation of the Divine, forgetting his duty to his wife and children, whom he was bound to support with food, clothing and shelter? Did he tell them that a man, bound down by marriage to a particular course of life, had no right to deviate from it or to devote himself to divine work without his wife's permission? Did he tell them that it was by chance that Ramkrishna became a Paramahansa, because his young and handsome wife,

convinced that her prospects in nuptial life were by no means encouraging, readily gave him permission not to worry about her ? Did he tell them that he would have lived as an ordinary man, probably as a *pujari* in a temple, with a six months of nursing and treatment for neuropathy, but for this generous permission, and that there would have been no Ramkrishna Mission, no Vivekananda, no Belurmath, no essential sameness of religion all over the world and no Cowasjee Hall meeting and no pleasant and splendid equivocations ? Did he enlighten them on the extent to which Ramkrishna's visions that Christ, Mahomet, Krishna and the Vedic Rishis were emissaries from one and the same God, had brought together Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians to embrace one another as sons of the same Father in Heaven ? Did he tell them that the followers of Ramkrishna had all but forgotten the message of unity revealed by Ramkrishna and that none of them had ever seen Christ or Mahomet in their religious experience ? Did he tell them that Ramkrishna himself had a strong predilection for Kali and that his *yoga* with Christ, Mahomet and Buddha was a fascinating fiction created for the benefit of humanists, who believe in the brotherhood of man without any notion that they have a common Father in God ?

THE END.



